



## Window on Jordan

By Marwan Asmar  
Star Staff Writer

IT CAN safely be said, and I think many will agree, that Jordan is a country of car honkers. Drivers blow their horns everywhere and anywhere on the road—morning, noon and night. It's a sign of national joy. Only last week, Jordan was literally turned upside down by the football win against Syria.

However nowhere is this honking phenomena

more accepted than in wedding processions: when the bride and groom are driven through the streets of the city in a motorized procession for a true Jordanian party. And as we are already well into the summer, which some say is the mating season for Jordanians, these processions, with honking cars and an occasional firing of arms into the sky, is the norm. It's business galore for owners of public reception halls.

The sum total of this is that no marriage procession is complete without the rowdy blowing of car horns. In other countries, honking is anti-social, even illegal, but not here.

You can sound your horn for all your heart's content and get away with it. And if some one doesn't like it, then that's his problem, not the society's.

The marriage procession is part of a ritual which

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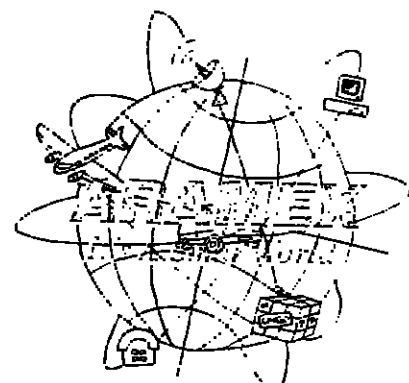
# The Star

Jordan's political, economic  
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اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Jordan intervenes to save peace process

## Bombing responsibility remains mystery amid new threats

LA Times-Washington Post News Service and agency reports  
OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—Amid threats of new suicide bombings, Israeli officials say they are still struggling to determine the identities and allegiances of the two men who carried out last week's attack on a produce market here.

The 30 July bombing has thrust Israeli and Palestinian peacemaking to a new low, setting off waves of angry recriminations from both sides that threaten to swamp the 4-year-old dialogue. The crisis also has prompted a flurry of diplomacy, with Israel's foreign minister flying to Egypt for emergency talks Tuesday and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan visit to West Jerusalem Wednesday.

US special envoy Dennis Ross is scheduled to visit the region this weekend. But the fragility of the peace process was underlined with a new threat from the militant Islamic group Hamas, which claimed responsibility for the Jerusalem attack in a leaflet last week. In a statement faxed Tuesday to the Reuters news agency, the military wing of Hamas said it would launch a "chain of martyrdom attacks" inside Israel because the Jewish state had not met a Sunday deadline to release all Palestinian prisoners.

"A chain of martyrdom attacks will come at the appropriate time to hit deep into Zionism. The Zionist entity state will become a state of frightened cowards that will know no rest or security," Hamas's Izz El Deen Al Qassam Brigades said in its statement.

Some Israeli and Palestin-



ian officials have cast doubt on the authenticity of the recent leaflets, saying they are not typical of previous statements from Hamas. Nonetheless, Israeli officials said they believe Hamas was behind the Jerusalem bombing, which killed 13 people in addition to the two bombers, and wounded 170 others.

The group is believed responsible for attacks that have killed scores of Israelis in recent years. As yet, how-

ever, Israel has no actual proof this time, a senior military official said Tuesday. The bombers' fingerprints and faces, which were largely intact after the explosions, are unknown to authorities here. No relatives have come forward to claim the bodies. And mourning tents, often erected at the homes of family members after previous suicide attacks, have not appeared in Palestinian communities.

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FLU VACCINE—Clinical trial results announced last week by the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) of the National Institutes of Health, indicate that Aviron's intranasal cold adapted influenza vaccine prevented culture-confirmed influenza in nearly all the children who received it. Pictured here is a child receiving the nasal spray vaccine. Children are primary transmitters of the disease, which infects between 35 million and 50 million Americans each year. (Feature Photo Service)

## Government and opposition To talk or not to talk...

By Raed Al Abed  
Star Staff Writer

LAST WEEK'S suicide bombing in a West Jerusalem busy marketplace and Jordan's efforts to ease tension on the Palestinian-Israeli track have diverted attention from local political issues. Until last Wednesday's incident, the issue of the upcoming parliamentary elections had dominated Jordanian politics. However, the internal political crisis, which had erupted when the opposition parties, led by the Islamists, decided to boycott the November elections, has now cooled off—for the time being at least.

Just when the government and the Islamists were exchanging hints about how and when to start talking to each other, His Majesty the King appeared to be closing the door in the face of the Islamists.

The government, which was toning down its tone, suddenly adopted a non-chalant stance regarding the proposed dialogue. This came after the King made statements last week saying that there will "no dialogue" unless it is in the best interest of this country and there will be no conditions.

Addressing the graduates of

the 9th batch of army officers from the Royal War College, the King stressed "dialogue will not be held over our democratic march, or over policies approved by Parliament which represent the people of this country."

In order to put an end to the debate on the date of the coming elections, the cabinet, last Tuesday, fixed 4 November as the date for the parliamentary elections.

Minister of Interior Nahir Rashid called on all political forces in the country to play an active role in the elections to choose their next lawmakers.

Rashid denied news about the government's intention to invite international observers to supervise the elections, as the opposition earlier demanded.

However, both government and opposition are at loggerheads regarding who will take the initiative to start the dialogue. Despite the fact that both are waiting a signal by the other to arrange for talks, none is willing to make the first move.

Despite this, the opposition, particularly Islamists, is accusing the government of closing the door to begin a meaningful dialogue with the political parties.

The Muslim Brotherhood.

long considered as a historical ally of the political order, accused the government of going back on its word to hold dialogue with the opposition without prior conditions. "The stand of the government consolidates our belief that the boycott decision was right and is in the interest of the country," said Mr. Abdel Majeed Thuneibat, the Overseer of the Muslim Brotherhood.

On his arrival from an official visit to Malaysia early this week, Prime Minister Dr. Abdel Salam Al Majali said his government will not arrange for any meeting but "we welcome any party which asks to meet the government."

Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Abdallah Al Nsour, supported Al Majali's stand but added that "dialogue is welcomed but not on bases and principles," referring to certain legislations that are already ratified by Parliament.

The two official statements are not going down well with the Brotherhood's leader. "The statements are surprising and signals the closing of the door for dialogue," adding that "we will discuss with the other parties our next step."

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## Prince Hassan warns of a 'dangerous crisis' Netanyahu says no let up in closure, blames Arafat

By a Star Staff Writer

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rebuffed Jordanian mediation attempts to ease off the stiff measures taken against the Palestinians by the Israeli government in the wake of last Wednesday's double suicide bomb attack in a Jerusalem market.

After more than three hours of negotiations between His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and the Israeli premier, Netanyahu announced that Israel will not be easing its closure of the Palestinian areas.

Both men appeared stern faced as they spoke to a news conference outside the Israeli Prime Ministry in West Jerusalem on Wednesday.

Prince Hassan described the region as passing through "a dangerous crisis" following Wednesday's attack and Israel's closure of Palestinian territories. He added that there could not be peace without security and security without peace. He called on the Israeli government to ease off the closure and resume negotiations with the Palestinian authority. He urged both Israel and the Palestinians not to let the extremists who carried out the bombings derail the peace process.

"Our frustration is that violence continues to threaten us and to menace us and that all we can do is speak of containment. We are dealing here with a human peace, a peace that affects lives, that promotes life, that promotes human dignity," the Prince said.

On his part, Netanyahu blamed Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and his Palestinian Authority for last Wednesday's terror attack and said he will not rescind his tough measures against the Palestinians until he can be assured that the Palestinian leadership is fighting terrorism.

"It is for the Palestinian Authority to take firm and decisive and comprehensive and immediate steps against the infrastructure of the terrorist organizations," Netanyahu said.

Prince Hassan and Prime Minister Ahdul Salam Majali conferred with Netanyahu and his inner cabinet ministers on ways to salvage the beleaguered Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

His Majesty King Hussein had depurized the Crown Prince to meet with Netanyahu in a last-minute change of plans. Less than a day after Netanyahu's office announced that the King would be making the trip.

Netanyahu's director of communications, David Bar-Ilan, was unable to pinpoint the reason for the King's decision, guessing that it may have been a question of protocol. The Jerusalem Post reported.

Arriving by a military helicopter, Prince Hassan headed immediately for a private meeting with Netanyahu, which was followed by a luncheon and a news conference. Prince Hassan met later with President Ezer Weizman.

Observers described the general mood after Wednesday's meeting as pessimistic and gloomy. It was not clear if Netanyahu will be visiting Amman next week.

Prince Hassan said his visit to Israel came as a result of President Arafat's two-day visit to Amman this week in which he urged the Jordanian leadership to intervene to convince Israel to lift a general closure of the Palestinian areas. Netanyahu called on Arafat to wage a serious fight against terrorism.

Prince Hassan was accompanied on his visit by Prime Minister Majali, Minister of Foreign Affairs Faysel Tarawneh and Minister of Trade and Industry Dr. Hani Mulqi.

## Lebanon arts festival returns after 23-year interruption

By Nora Boustany

BAALBEK, Lebanon—The mournful voice floated out over the moonlit steps of the ancient temple, accusing, rebuking. "You Arabs of the past have become like a fairy tale," it intoned. "When you look at yourself, the mirror shies away in shame."

The opening-night performance at the famed Baalbek Festival was the dance drama "Andalusia: The Lost Glory," recalling the grandeur—and then the decline—of Andalusia under Arab rule. But the audience understood that this was really their story, the story of Lebanon.

This performance, despite its theme of downfall and despair, was a sign of hope. The arts festival, which once attracted the luminaries of the art world, had not taken place since 1974. After so many years of chaos and warfare, its return was another milestone in Lebanon's trek toward normality.

This year's festival was only four days long, compared with six weeks in earlier years. But, as if to support its optimism, it coincided with a move by the State Department toward lifting the 10-year ban on travel by US citizens to Lebanon.

Nicole Assaily, the vice president of the festival, ignored the skeptics who had told her no one would come. "We have always been gamblers," she said. "Look at what happened during the Olympic Games in Atlanta. We are as secure as anybody can be. So it was that near the Bekaa Valley, where American hostages once languished in captivity and Israeli planes strafed



farmland and guerrilla bases, thousands of Lebanese turned out for a ritual of cultural and national healing.

The star of the festival was

globe-trotting Russian cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, former conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra, who had performed at Baalbek as early as 1956. "I believe culture is in the genes," he said at a party in his honor Tuesday night, "and this is why it is here now."

Assaily said the first call was made to Rostropovich early in February and though he said he had only had one night free until the year 2000, he accepted. He will be collecting a fee of \$100,000.

But when Lebanon's beloved national singer, Fairouz, demanded \$300,000 for herself and \$350,000 for her dance troupe, the festival committee declined. Instead, the Caracalla Dance Theater, the Lebanese troupe that performed the Andalusia drama, agreed to perform for three nights at \$250,000.

"We had to start somewhere,"

said Assaily. "If we were to wait for everything to be perfect, we would be waiting for a very long time yet."

The committee was strapped for cash because nothing was left of the festival's old facilities. Lights, a sound system, chairs, toilets—everything had to be bought and installed. But in the end, the hard work was rewarded: With tickets going for \$14 to \$100, all four nights sold out.

Organizers were particularly concerned about the reaction of Baalbekis, who are engaged in a campaign of civil disobedience, refusing to pay taxes and utility bills in protest against government neglect. Posters of Iranian leaders still adorn murals in this central Lebanese town, and Hezbollah, the Iran-funded "Party of God," is entrenched in the countryside.

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# Summer nights come alive

By Stephen Brannon  
Special to The Star

ONE THING Amman really has going for it and that is darn good summer weather. Can you, for instance, remember the last outdoor activity you planned that was cancelled due to an unexpected rainstorm? I thought not. Of course, I know that most Jordanians would be overjoyed to have even a light sprinkle during the summer months, but the predictably cool, arid evenings that Amman enjoys are ideal for outdoor entertainment.

Now that the celebrations and festive gun firing following Jordan's soccer triumph are over, most of us feel safe enough to come out from behind our coffee tables, television sets or steering wheels to walk again in the fresh night air. Many of Amman's younger generation seem to enjoy risk-taking and limb in the automobile-infested gridlocks of Abdoun or, even worse, Sweifiyah. But there are places where the pedestrian reigns supreme.

First and foremost of these is the Jerash Festival of Culture and Arts. Held every summer under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, the Jerash Festival brings some of the biggest musical names in the Arab world, as well as a potpourri of Arab and international musical attractions, theater companies, folklore troupes, poets and other assorted artists. The festival lasts for about two weeks, and is held among the spectacular ruins of the ancient Greco-Roman city of Jerash, about 45 minutes outside of Amman.

The Jerash Festival is a true Jordanian success story for several reasons. Although there have been a few problems with ticket distribution this year, it is generally a very

well-run operation. A good program, excellent facilities and lighting, and quality performers strutting their stuff amidst the magnificent backdrop of Jerash makes for an event to look forward to every year. From my perspective, the biggest hassle at Jerash is watching your step as you walk on the uneven stone slabs lining the main thoroughfare!

But what makes the Jerash Festival truly outstanding is that it draws both 'the elites' and 'the masses.' The two classifications rarely converge in Jordan, and it takes either exceptional circumstances or a true variety of attractions to bring them together. The soccer team's triumph in Beirut was an exceptional circumstance, and it brought all Jordanians—from ministers to service drivers—together as fellow countrymen for a brief moment in the sun. At Jerash, attractions such as Shakespearean plays, Russian ballets, Broadway sopranos and South African Zulu singers attract a good smattering of Westerners as well as Jordanian 'westernized' elites, while the main open area is filled of Jordanian *shabab* there just to enjoy a night out in the festive atmosphere.

Jerash's largest arena, the South Theater, is reserved for the festival's most popular shows, mainly famous Arabic singers such as Kathem Al Saher and Wael Kfoury. The theater holds somewhere around 10,000 people, and is often packed to (or over) capacity. Less spacious for such as the North Theater, the Light and Sound Theater, the South Theater and the Artemis Steps host a variety of lesser Arabic acts, as well as the international attractions.

The most 'common,' or *shabi*, areas at the Jerash Festival are the Oval Piazza and the Colonnades Street. The Oval Piazza is

the symbolic center of the festival, as it contains the ceremonial torch, and its location makes it the hub of public interaction there. The big-name Arabic musicians who come to Jerash don't come cheap, so many Jordanians opt simply to hang out in the Oval Piazza so they can enjoy the various acts who perform there for free. The Colonnades Street, with its tricky stone slabs, hosts an impressive number of traditional and not-so-traditional (One fellow I saw was selling sculptures of rock 'n' roll musicians he had crafted from wood and wire!) artisans from Jordan and other Arab countries.

The Oval Piazza and the Colonnades are where the 'elites' and the 'masses' come in contact most often at Jerash. The contact is usually only superficial, with little real interaction taking place. The great divide which separates the two groups is still not breached, but at least each gets a glimpse of the other. Unfortunately, sometimes a glimpse can turn into an unwanted stare or a haughty scowl, reinforcing preexisting stereotypes.

While a visit to the Jerash Festival is often 'goal-oriented,' in that you go to see a specific performer, a more laid-back outdoor alternative can be found a good bit closer to home. Every Friday evening, the Greater Amman Municipality closes off the lower section of Shmeisani to automobiles, and the footsoldiers of culture take over.

The Municipality has hired several bands to play at Shmeisani. The most popular one is a large group which plays traditional Bedouin style music, complete with a young boy who sword dances. Another group plays contemporary Arab music, while an energetic *dabkeh* dancing troupe



holds the middle ground between the two. While the music is definitely worth checking out, most people who go to the area on Friday evenings don't go to see a specific band. Rather, they go to enjoy the scene and be with their family or friends. The important thing is not the show they will see but whom they see it with.

Several other factors contribute to the easy-going family atmosphere that prevails at the Shmeisani festivities. First of all, the wide street provides lots of room to walk comfortably without being pressed by crowds. Also, the police are visibly present but not intrusive.

At least as important, however, is the fact that pedestrians always have the option of settling down at one of Shmeisani's famous sidewalk coffeehouses. An *arghileh*, a cup of tea, and—perhaps most importantly of all—a comfortable chair provide all the accoutrements necessary for a relaxing evening of music and people-watching. As usual, women and families gravitate to the less public areas, which in

this case are the cafes, while the street crowds are dominated by men. The cafes therefore give families, and older people who simply need a rest, a good 'base' from which to observe the festivities.

Like at the Jerash Festival, you can observe rich and poor, 'elites' and 'masses,' together at the Shmeisani festivities. Just from my completely unscientific observations, though, Shmeisani has a more middle-class family feel to it. Also, many of the 'elites' who come to Shmeisani these Fridays are vacationers from the Gulf.

Events such as the Jerash Festival and Shmeisani Fridays should be promoted and encouraged, as they serve to revitalize traditional Jordanian and Arab music, dancing and poetry (as well as *arghileh* smoking). But the thousands who flock to these festivities don't do so out of the noble desire to 'promote their culture.' It's simply a fun thing to do. And, by the way, you can always count on great weather. ■

## Lebanon arts festival returns after 23-year interruption

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To forestall any trouble, festival leaders set aside the first night for the locals, at the reduced fee of \$7 a seat. Scores of Lebanese soldiers and police as well as Syrian troops were deployed in and around the citadel for security. Yet instead of opposing the spectacle, 6,000 people showed up expecting to be seated in the allotted 2,300 seats.

David Khairallah, a Lebanese who is deputy counsel at the World Bank in Washington, walked out after the performance in a blissful daze. "It all makes me feel... again," he said. "To see these people clap and participate was so moving. It restored the hope that a certain vitality is irreplaceable."

"War was a fact," said Noura Jumblatt, wife of Druze chief Walid Jumblatt, who is minister of refugee affairs. "And at a certain point you must stop thinking about drawing a line and start building a new identity. There is cultural reconstruction to be done; you cannot just have the reconstruction of buildings."

No one was as thrilled as Abdel Halim Caracalla, the choreographer and costume designer of the dance troupe. A native of Baalbek, Caracalla had a special appreciation of his surroundings, the temple with its 70-foot pillars.

"Not anyone can fill this place," he said. "Artists who come here have to have a special spirit. If you don't, the gods let you feel it."

Baalbek was initially named for the Phoenician god Baal; the Greeks later called it Heliopolis, city of the sun. The Roman citadel was built in the 2nd and 3rd centuries.

"To have the festival back is a triumph of art over everything else that has happened here," said Caracalla. "Everything can stop during wars, but the artist has no choice but to keep going. I have been working on this piece for 1 1/2 years." ■

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

## Bombing responsibility remains mystery amid new threats

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Israeli officials say, at least publicly, that they do not yet know whether the bombers came from Arab villages inside Israel, from the West Bank or Gaza Strip or from abroad. They say they do not even know for sure whether the explosive used was TNT, which is generally used by Hamas and another militant Palestinian group, Islamic Jihad, or the more powerful RDX, which has been used by Lebanese organization Hezbollah.

"The investigation hasn't ruled out anything," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

But others pointed to similar characteristics, including the design of the bombs and the fact that they were studied with nails, between last week's attack and previous bombings claimed by Hamas.

Since the market explosions, the government of

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has launched a withering assault on President Yasser Arafat and his Palestinian Authority, alleging that he and his government bear primary responsibility because they failed to stop the attack.

Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai said Tuesday that the Palestinian National Authority is cooperating with Israel in the investigation of last week's bombing and had made some arrests. But he and others said the Palestinians, despite pressure from Israel and the United States, have thus far done little to arrest the militant groups' leaders, collect large numbers of weapons or crack their infrastructure.

In response to the bombing, Israel has imposed a nearly total closure on Palestinian border territories, including Jordan crossings to Jordan and Egypt, cut the flow of

required tax revenues to the Palestinians and threatened to mount commando strikes into Palestinian-ruled territory to make arrests.

Arafat, speaking to reporters in Jordan after a meeting with His Majesty King Hussein, said the bombers "came from abroad," citing information he said was gathered by Palestinian and Israeli security officials.

Arafat told reporters after talks with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali that his security bosses had told him that even Israeli intelligence pointed to the suicide bombers coming from outside Palestinian self-rule areas.

"We have been informed by military security officers that all their [Israeli] probabilities are that they [the bombers] have come from

outside [self-rule areas], so what fault is this of the Palestinian people," Arafat said.

Arafat described Israel's sealing off of Palestinian self-rule areas as "criminal measures, criminal, to starve the Palestinian people, to impose a siege on the people." Israel's total shut off of the Palestinian areas is costing the Palestinian economy an estimated \$9 million daily.

Meanwhile, a new potential trouble spot appeared on the horizon. The Israeli activist group Peace Now released a report Tuesday claiming that more than 44,000 new homes are planned in Jewish settlements throughout the Occupied Territories. Palestinians, who hope to establish a state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, see such settlements as an obstacle to peace.

Spokesmen for settler organizations denied the Peace Now report. The Defense Ministry, which must give final approval to building in the territories, had no immediate comment. ■

## To talk or not to talk...

Continued from page 1

However, the other six opposition parties which link their participation to various conditions, expressed optimism regarding the official comments.

"The six parties studied these statements and believe that the government wants to open the door for dialogue," said Mohammad Al Zo'bi, general secretary of the pan-Arabist National Action Front (Naf). ■

Al Zo'bi believes that Dr. Nsoor confirmed the views of King Hussein that the door for dialogue remains open except for the constitutionally agreed upon matters like the one-man one-vote electoral system and the peace treaty.

The six parties, the Popular Democratic, the Communist, Arab Land, Arab Ba'th, Progressive Ba'th and Haq, have decided to participate in the coming elections but with conditions relating to political and economic reforms.

The six parties have decided

not to boycott the elections because they don't want to be accused of following in the footsteps of the Islamists. In this respect they attacked four other opposition parties who adopted the Muslim Brotherhood.

"And against this, the 11-party opposition alliance failed to reach a common ground on the conditions for dialogue with the government. We failed to reach a united stand on subjects for dialogue with the government," said Salem Al Nahas, general secretary of the Jordanian People's Democratic Party (Hashd). Nahas added that six opposition parties refused to link participation in the elections with the change in the electoral system.

Official preparations for the elections have already started. Since 31 July the 19 and above age groups, that is those who have not participated in the previous elections, have started registering their names in official centers. The authorities fixed 15 August as the deadline.

The number of voters is expected to reach about 1.5 million (male and female), an increase of about 350,000 voters compared to the figures in the 1993 elections.

Jordan is divided into 21 electoral constituencies, among them five in the Amman governorate in addition to the Mad Beduin district.

According to the Civil Status Dept., the number of citizens who have the right to vote is 2,219,988.

Registered voters in the 1993 elections were about 1,501,972, of whom 1,203,329 received election cards, and composing about 80.1 percent

of the total. Those who voted in the 1993 elections were 821,065, about 68.1 percent of voters who got election cards.

The candidacy process for the Lower House will start on 10 October and lasts for three days. The election campaigns automatically start from this date, and continues for 25 days, till 3 November. Election campaigns are prohibited during the voting day.

The law stipulates that official employees who wish to run as candidates are asked to resign their posts, one month in advance before voting starts.

Ministers who are willing to resign or stand for the elections are given 15 days before the elections start. ■

## Abu Hodeib submits paper on GAM

ADDRESSING PARTICIPANTS from 160 cities all over the world, that participated in the International Mayors Conference, Shahada Abu Hodeib, assistant undersecretary for planning in Amman Greater Municipality, said that GAM gives much concern to improve poor areas and ways to combat desertification.

Abu Hodeib, who is a member on the National Team for Urban Management Program (UMP), submitted a paper in the conference dealing with the projects of preserving architectural heritage and enhancing the cultural identity of Amman.

The Municipality had renovated many ancient buildings and converted them into tourist sites in Jordan.

Hodeib added that GAM is moving towards the final stage



Abu Hodeib

in the building of a station to produce fertilizers by recycling of wastes. This project is expected to improve the environmental conditions in the city and create more job opportunities, Hodeib said. ■

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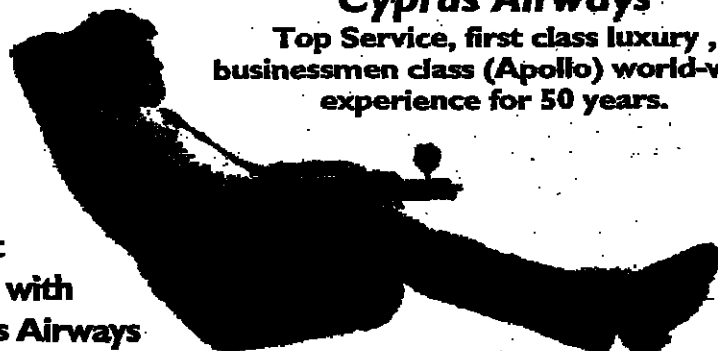
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## JORDAN

### W E E K



An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

#### King Hussein to appear on "Brink of Peace"

His Majesty King Hussein will appear on a documentary, titled "The Brink of Peace" that is scheduled for worldwide broadcasting on 28 October. According to the *Jerusalem Post*, Former Israeli Foreign Minister made a three-day visit to Jordan last week where he interviewed King Hussein for the film.

#### Local tourism operators barred

Ten local travel operators and one Lebanese agency have been black listed by the Syrian government from entering their country. The Syrians argue that this is because these operators deal with the Israelis. But local travel agents are angry, saying that there is no proof that they have dealings with the Israelis, and pointing out that the ban, which was imposed more than two months ago, is costing them a lot of money. They add that they have been doing business with Syria for the last two decades. The travel operators have appealed to the Ministry of Tourism to pressure the Syrians, and at last their calls appear to be gaining a hearing. The Syrian Ministry of Tourism promised to look further into the imposed ban.

#### Malaysia to employ 3,000 Jordanians

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali said that the Malaysian government intends to employ 3,000 Jordanians workers. Following a meeting with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammed last week, Mr Majali said that the Kuala Lumpur government will consider recruiting others in the coming years.

On other matters of cooperation, such as water, health, investment and education, Majali described the two countries as agreeing to activate bilateral agreements signed in 1994.

The Malaysian government will launch a project in Aqaba and build dams in the southern part of the kingdom, Mr Majali said.

The premier toured several Malaysian projects, accompanied by Minister of Health Ashraf Al Kurdi, Minister of Finance Suleiman Hafez and Jordanian Ambassador to Malaysia Luay Khashman.

#### AIDS victims

Five Jordanians died from the killer disease, AIDS bringing down the number of AIDS carriers in this country to 126. Of this number, three are children while the rest are divided between males and females. Jordan has one of the lowest rates of AIDS carriers in the Arab countries and in the world, health officials point out. Although free, the cost of treating an AIDS patient in Jordan is between JD 2000 to JD 3000. But another set of figures was released by the same Ministry of Health in the latter part of the week. There is now 154 registered patients, 52 have the full blown AIDS virus, while the rest are still in the incubation stage, and 58 people of the total number are foreigners. So far, the number of people who died from AIDS since 1986 is 42 according to Health Ministry sources.

#### In defence of Jerusalem

A conference for the defence of Jerusalem will be held on 20-21 August. The conference, which date coincides with the burning of the Al Aqsa mosque in 1968 by an Israeli, is intended to devise a strategy to protect the holy city, from the latest Israeli onslaught of settlement building. More than 2000 participants from Jordan and Palestine will attend as well as 100 from the Arab countries and 20 from the international community.

#### Going up!

The fares of "service" and taxi cars have increased as of last Sunday. Passengers now have to pay 10 fils extra for "service" cars. For taxis it is somewhat different. The taxi meter will continue at the present log-in charge of 150 fils but will increase by 10 fils for every 90 meters. For every 48 seconds wait, the meter will increase by another 10 fils.

#### Another group wedding

A group wedding ceremony will take place in Irbid on 15 August. This is the first group wedding that takes place outside Amman. Needless to say that the event is organized by the Al Afaf Charity.



His Majesty King Hussein drives Palestinian President Yasser Arafat upon his arrival in Amman last Monday. King Hussein and President Arafat reviewed the intensive efforts exerted to ease tension following Israel's suspension of negotiations with the Palestinians and the closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The following day Arafat met Prime Minister Abdel Salam Al Majali.

## Dr Bassem George Salman, a 23-year-old The youngest Jordanian to hold a Phd

By Zeid Nasser  
Star Staff Writer

YOUNG ACADEMIC achievers from all over the world have always been a source of pride for their countries and the academic institutions where they studied at.

It is a pleasant surprise to know that we have such a person among us Jordanians, whose academic achievement is quite unique on both the country and region's level.

Dr Bassem George Salman, who is just 23 years of age, holds a doctorate in Electrical Engineering, specialized in Electromagnetics. He is, very probably, the youngest holder of a doctorate degree in Jordan. What's more, his specialization is generally rare, and only a few Arab scientists have obtained it.

The road leading to his academic achievement started when he was a school student in Qatar, who was placed one class ahead of his peers due to passing an aptitude test. Later on, when he returned to Jordan with his family, he pushed forth at the National Orthodox School (NOS), obtaining his General Certificate of Education (GCE) in 1989. Following that, Bassem enrolled in the Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey, where he started his education in electrical engineering. One year later he moved to Swansea University in Wales, where he obtained a BA degree in electrical engineering in 1993. Afterwards, he enrolled in the Higher Studies program leading to a doctorate of electrical engineering.

and three years later, in 1997, he had obtained it.

Dr Salman told *The Star* that "research and development are key factors to successful production, however we don't see much coordination between research and production in the Arab World in general. I hope that, in the near future, there will be more appreciation of research and its value as an important factor for future revenue generation, which is why companies abroad, with a long-term view enjoy close relations with research organizations."

Dr Salman has been working at Swansea University as a Senior Researcher, mainly due to a computer program he wrote which conducts testing functions. Based on his continued research, Dr Salman has been able to continually develop his technique called 'the method of moments' which he uses in 'electromagnetic modelling'. This was the subject of his doctorate.

"My specialty, provides through scientific testing of critical products, prior to production. Accordingly, companies and corporations utilize our findings to push forth with production or not. Basically, we tell them if something will work, or not," added Dr Salman.

"Electromagnetics provide several methods to test products, and are also a key component in product functionality. Today, through the use of fast, advanced computers, we



Salman

can better predict the performance of products."

The technique that Dr Salman specializes in is used in several industries including

mobile communications—digital or wireless—medicine, military industries, satellite building and others. Looking to his immediate future, Dr Salman hopes to find a means by which he can work in his field, or in related fields, in Jordan or neighboring Arab countries.

"I already have the option to work abroad, in Europe, but I would like to explore the opportunities available closer to home," commented the Phd holder. Let's hope that organizations and corporations in Jordan—or in Arab countries in general—can harness the skills of talented people like Dr Salman. After all, this would be to the benefit of us all, and it would be part of our advancement as nations in this modern world. ■

## Beeb, toot, come and hoot with the bridal procession, yalla

Continued from page 1

newly weds must go through in this country, and other Arab countries. Before the marriage is consummated, in theory at least, the poor or not as the case may be, bride and groom have to be literally shown off, in screaming cars, with blowing horns, and in an atmosphere of goodwill.

Theirs is the first decorated automobile in front of a long procession of cars that are filled with men, women, screaming children and babies who are only too willing to give them a big send off. It's also the women's turn at taking part—ululating all the way.

But this is not really a send off. The *zafah's* first point of call is the public reception hall, or *saleh*, where the real party is set to begin.

Just the other day, I found myself right in the middle of a marriage procession. This was the first time that I had partaken in what it now seemed a thunderous event.

The cars set off one after another. As the "marriage car" geared down the hill, it was show time, for the rest of the procession which can have a tail-back as far as 300 meters long or even more.

Beeb, beeb, beeb, toot toot, toot, honk, honk, every car was sending off its own manufactured voice. Never mind the people outside, we are here to enjoy ourselves and have a damn good time.

Never mind the stares, never mind the cursing by people watching, this is a joyous occasion for us and "we want to make sure that everybody knows about it."

Beeb, beeb, beeb, the drivers would honk as the cars spread away. In a marriage procession the cars follow each other, I suppose, to make the honking sound louder.

Quick stay after them, the adrenalin going into my veins. Honking can make a lot of people feel excited. Beeb, beeb, beeb they would go, and here I am, telling the driver to keep honking, oblivious to what was happening outside. Did I care, probably not!

It was joining the fun, and basically having a big party on the road. People in cars were not only hooting but clapping their hands, shouting and sing-

ing. In this procession, a kind of crowd psychology engulfs you, it's that beastly instinct in all of us that comes to express our dare, to do things on the road which we wouldn't normally do.

Beeb, toot. "Come on sing," *yalla*, shouts one of the passengers in the car. And this can go on for a good half hour or longer, it depends where the bride and groom are being taken, is it a party in the groom's home or is it in the *saleh*.

In this procession, it was to the public reception hall, the big hall of ceremonies where we can sing and be merry on Pepsi and 7Up and staid cake!

But would it end there, never on your life, we have another one this time, "a foot procession" up to the *saleh*—another 20 minutes into the celebration at least. This time the bride and groom, surrounded by the many well wishers who scrambled out of their cars, are the principle players in the *zafah*.

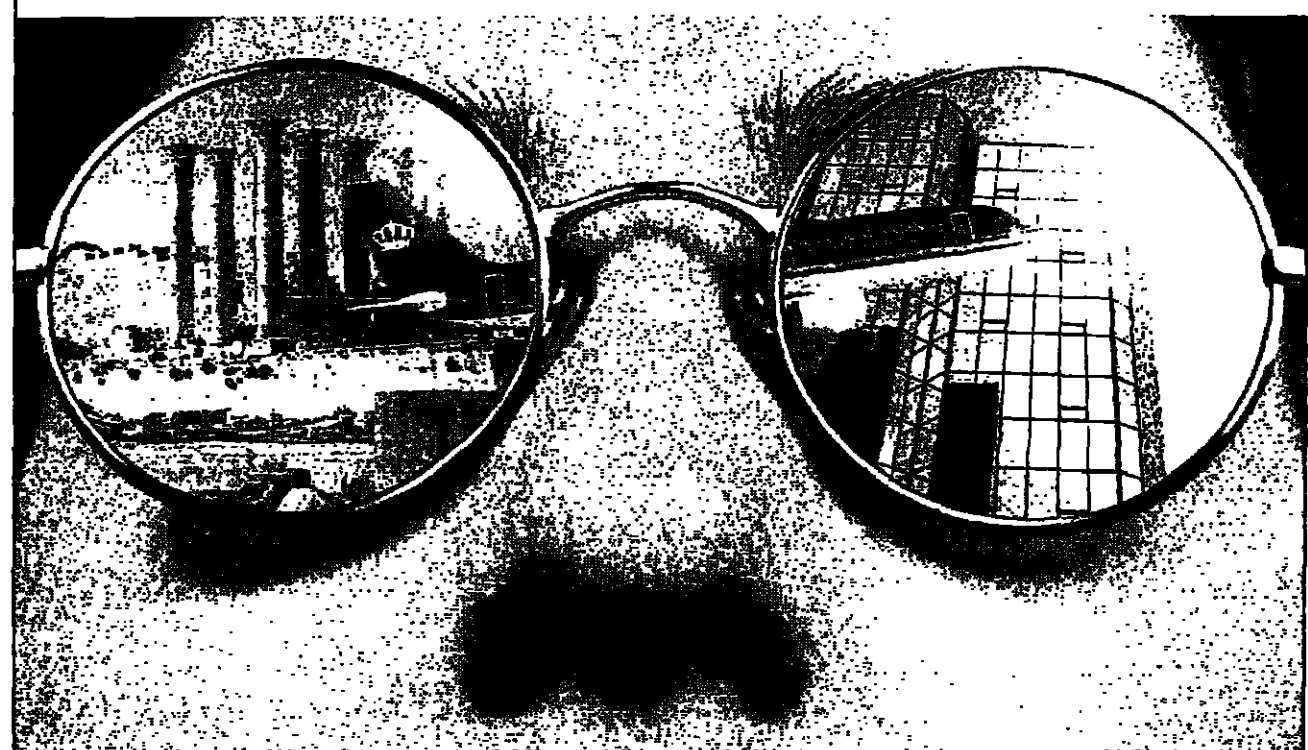
Standing arm in arm, they are taken slowly up the alleyway at the behest of a number of dancers who perform anything from folklore to what looks like modern-day acrobatics. But none of these movements is ever complete without the small band of singer and musicians who accompany the *zafah* all the way into the *saleh*.

Once inside, the couple are seated on the "bridal throne" for the next two hours. Singing, dancing, cake on the floor, it's total chaos. But nobody cares. People are there to enjoy themselves. To hell with the mess. By the end of two hours, everybody is exhausted, practicing the *shuk-keh* and the modern twist.

But do we end there? No. The final stage of the party is to scramble again into the cars and take the bride and groom to their happy nest.

More tooting and hooting follows, however this time it is much mellower. I don't blame them, people appear to have had enough. However, this is the traditional custom. They and in particular close family members are not allowed to disperse until they deliver the couple right to their very doorstep, and this we did. What a night! ■

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## BBC and Monte Carlo to broadcast in Jordan

THE BBC has signed an agreement with Jordan Radio and Television for a 24-hour FM frequency in Amman. The deal means that by the end of the year BBC Arabic Service programmes will be broadcast all day on FM from Amman.

The contract was signed in London at Broadcasting House, the BBC's headquarters, by Mr Ihsan Ramzi, Director-General of JRTV and Mr Robert Phillips, the BBC Deputy Director-General and Chairman of BBC Worldwide. The agreement also provides journalistic and engineering training for Jordanian broadcasters, and BBC Arabic Service programmes to be made available for broadcast on Jordanian radio.

"This contract represents a major new development for the BBC at the heart of the Arab world," said Mr Phillips. "Our arrival on FM in Amman positions us strongly to enhance our role as the leading radio broadcaster in Arabic in the years ahead."

The signing follows several months of negotiation. It means that some two million people in greater Amman and parts of the West Bank will be able to tune in to the BBC on 103.1 FM via a 5 kw transmitter to be installed before the end of the year. "I'm delighted that this agreement is to be signed during my term of office," said Dr Samir Mutawi.

Jordan's Minister of state for Information Affairs, who was also at the signing, "I was fortunate to work with the BBC and I am fortunate to see that this agreement provides the BBC with a platform to an important segment of the Middle East."

Earlier this year the BBC increased its broadcasts in Arabic by five hours a day and now broadcasts for over 17 hours daily between 0830 and 0015 Jordanian summer time.

An agreement between the JRTV and Radio France International was also reached to broadcast Radio Monte Carlo/Middle East on the FM frequency from Amman. This agreement will be for three years. ■

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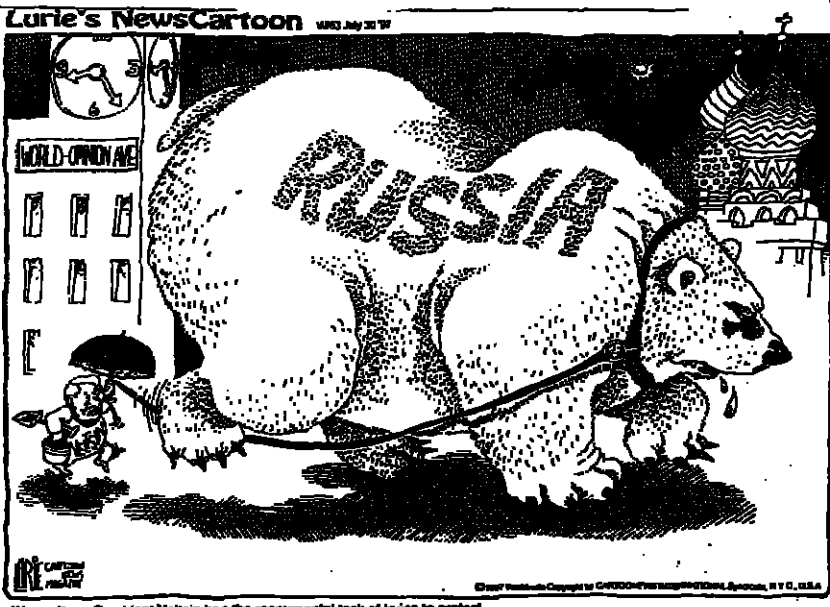
\* Submission of prequalification documents not later than 12:00 hrs of 16.8.1997 at the company head office.

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Chairman





(News Item: President Yeltsin has the monumental task of trying to protect Russia's personal liberties through their country's democratic growing pains.)

## Our Say...

### Netanyahu riding high

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Benjamin Netanyahu feels he does not need to answer to anyone when it comes to salvaging the peace process. He will not rescind his tough measures against the Palestinian people, which he slapped against the PNA-run areas after last Wednesday's double suicide bombing in a West Jerusalem market. He boasts about making certain "humanitarian gestures" to the besieged Palestinians like allowing in food and medicine. For all he cares, security for Israel comes by locking up the entire Palestinian people and throwing away the key.

And when he needs a moral backer or a protégé, well there is always the United States. If the US can impose sanctions against Libya, Iran and Iraq, why can't Israel do the same with the Palestinians.

The fact is that Netanyahu is relishing the moment; to humiliate the Palestinians and their leadership, to wriggle away from his responsibilities and commitments under the various peace agreements and to ride a wave of false and short-lived popularity at home. But his policies carry a tremendous price. The glimmer of genuine and just peace in this region has finally been extinguished. And to Netanyahu and his cabinet, the Palestinian people can never be seen as true victims. If extremism rises, as a direct result of his government's policies, then it is the fault of the Palestinian leadership—never his own. If a settler is hurt in Gaza, Hebron or elsewhere in Palestinian areas, then it is the Palestinian leadership that has caused his injury, or encouraged it.

In his meeting with the Israeli premier on Wednesday, Crown Prince Hassan called for a human peace, or peace that preserves human dignity. We don't think that Netanyahu was even listening. The truth of the matter is that in spite of the killings that take place on both sides of the fence, the current Israeli government does not seem to be interested in preventing future bloodbaths.

By strangulating the Palestinians and denying them of any hope and by humiliating their leadership, the Israeli leader is making sure that more disillusioned Palestinians and Arabs will become convinced that the only available option is to resort to extremism and militancy.

Netanyahu is riding high today. But what will he do if and when another suicide attack takes place? Will he then order his troops to reconquer the Palestinian areas? He has already threatened to do this. But then what? Netanyahu will be repeating history and history can only be repeated by those who misread it or don't understand its morals and lessons.

We believe that Netanyahu has put Israel and the entire region on a time bomb that is ticking away. He has created a sense of false security for the Israelis, one that is based on repression and collective punishment. He has closed the door on any hope for a just conclusion to the Palestinian tragedy before the end of this century. We share Prince Hassan's fears that a dangerous crisis is upon us. ■

## Letters to the Editor

### Kind words from Belgium

To the Editor,

I am Belgian and very interested about Jordan. I am taking the liberty to write to you to say that I wish to send to the Jordanian people my sincere condolences for the death of Jordanian pilot Omar Bilal at the Ostend Air Meeting.

We all appreciated very much the kind words of His Excellency the Jordanian Ambassador in Belgium and most of all the visit of Her Majesty the Queen of Jordan.

Yours Sincerely

Kenneth Heselwood  
Bouilliot Street 2  
1050 Brussels  
Belgium



Bilal

# Arafat's new political dilemma

By Rebecca Trounson

**OCCUPIED JERUSALEM**—Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, weakened by the faltering peace process and an internal corruption scandal, finds himself caught in a dilemma: how to satisfy Israeli and US demands for action against Islamic militant groups without angering his own people.

In the aftermath of the twin suicide bombings that killed 15 people and wounded dozens of others, Arafat is under considerable pressure to crack down on Hamas and Islamic Jihad, militant organizations that launch attacks on Israeli civilians from areas under his control.

The Palestinian leader has acted decisively in the past against extremists. But this time, his credibility with the Palestinian people is so tattered that it is not clear he can deliver on the demands for action, even if he wants to.

"He is weak right now," said Khalil al-Shikaki, who heads the Center for Palestine Research and Studies. "No one should expect that he can take any kind of decisive action."

As Arafat continued to weigh his options, the Israeli government sent hundreds of police and troops into Jerusalem and Tel Aviv last Friday to guard against further attacks. The streets, unusually quiet in recent days because of Israel's continuing closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, were emptied almost completely by late afternoon, well before sirens signaled the start of the Jewish Sabbath at 6:59 p.m.

The Israeli army had rounded up 51 Palestinians before dawn, bringing to 80 the number arrested on suspicion of "terrorist activities" since the Wednesday bombings. The security forces acted only in areas under Israeli control, refraining from making good on a threat to mount incursions into Palestinian-held areas.

But Israeli officials, while acknowledging that security cooperation with the Palestinians has improved slightly since Wednesday and that Palestinian police have arrested some militants, continued to accuse Arafat of paying lip service to their demands for a serious crackdown.

"We are seeing absolutely no effort from Arafat, at least of any relevance," said David Bar-Ilan, a senior aide to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Saeed Erekat, the Palestinians' chief negotiator with Israel, retorted that Netanyahu and his aides are using the attacks to "wage war on Mr Ar-

afat and the Palestinians," rather than work with them against terrorism. Also, with the bombers still unidentified and their allegiance and motivation unknown, it is too early for decisive action, he said.

US officials generally agreed with Israel, however. President Clinton has called on Arafat to take "concrete steps" to restore security cooperation with Israel and combat terrorism, but diplomats here say it is difficult to tell yet just how much Arafat is doing to clamp down on militants.

"We know there have been some arrests, but we don't know if anything's being done with the groups' infrastructure, bank accounts, safe houses and weapons caches," said one official involved in the US contacts. "He's not telling us."

"Arafat's obviously torn," the diplomat went on. "He knows what he has to do, but he seems to be going back and forth because of the political risk involved."

As commentator Hemi Shalev wrote last Thursday in the Israeli newspaper *Maariv*, the bombings also have destroyed Arafat's hope of gaining immediate US support for his battle against Netanyahu's policy of building new Jewish settlements on occupied land. "The attack will now transfer the focus of American attention away from Israeli construction in Jerusalem and... toward ter-

rorism" inside the Palestinian-ruled areas, Shalev wrote.

The situation was far different just over a year ago. The peace process with Israel was progressing and Arafat and his Fatah movement had just scored a decisive victory in the first Palestinian elections, giving him political legitimacy he had never had.

After 60 people died inside Israel in a series of suicide attacks in March and April of 1996, Arafat acted decisively, crippling Hamas and Islamic Jihad by jailing more than 1,200 people, including military and political leaders.

He was highly motivated to stop the terror attacks. By cracking down on the militants, he hoped to ensure that his peace partner, Labor Party leader and then-Prime Minister Shimon Peres, remained in power.

But Peres lost to Likud Party leader Netanyahu in national elections that May. And Netanyahu, suspicious of the peace process that Arafat and Peres embraced, has dramatically slowed its pace and taken other actions that have caused Arafat to lose credibility among Palestinians.

Since Netanyahu's election, Arafat has little in the way of new territory to show his people. He also has been helpless to prevent unilateral Israeli actions such as the decision to build a new Jewish neighborhood on Jerusalem's southeastern outskirts. Palestinians want the area as part

of a future Palestinian capital.

With little perceived benefit for their peace efforts, Arafat and his security services are reluctant to move too forcefully against Islamic militants for fear of appearing to do Israel's bidding, Shikaki said.

At the moment, the total closure of the territories, during which most Palestinians cannot enter Israel or even travel between Palestinian-controlled cities, is increasing economic hardship and fueling anger. Palestinians say the Israeli actions are collective punishment.

To make matters worse, Arafat's government is caught up in a widespread corruption scandal, accused by Palestinian legislators and others of mismanaging or losing millions of dollars in public money. Late last Friday, all but two of his 18-member Cabinet, including several of his most senior political allies, offered him their resignations.

"He's under tremendous pressure domestically, enough that it would almost be politically suicidal to move forcefully now against Hamas or Islamic Jihad," Shikaki said. "In the end, he will have to act against their military infrastructure but he'll do it in a very gradual way, and not to the extent Israel wants." ■

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



Iranian President-elect Mohammad Khatami welcomes Syrian President Hafez Al Asad to Tehran last Friday. The two leaders urged Turkey to reconsider its security and military cooperation with Israel. Khatami officially became president, Monday.

## Turkey

# Keeping the ethnic genie bottled up

Divided they stand

Reviewed by Edward Mortimer

BY FAR the worst thing about this book is its title. It sounds like one of those classics of Victorian pornography, which purport to initiate the reader into the titillating secrets of some "mysterious east."

Luckily the book itself is not at all like that. The authors, both experienced journalists long resident in Turkey, do not dwell on the country's exotic or outlandish features. On the contrary, they perform an admirable service in presenting the Turks as normal and likeable human beings, with whom western readers should not find it difficult to empathize.

This is in fact precisely the good, readable introduction to Turkish politics which has been cruelly lacking for at least a generation, a generation during which the country has opened up to the outside world and has discovered a new pluralism and dynamism.

The authors would not claim to rival the scholarship of Professor Bernard Lewis, but their work comes nearer to replacing or updating his *Emergence of Modern Turkey* (1961) than anything that has appeared in English since.

They do not pull their punches in describing the unpleasant aspects of recent Turkish history, of which the worst, needless to say, is the gratuitous savagery visited on the south-east of the country and on almost anyone who has tried to articulate the feeling of Kurdish identity a policy which unfortunately seems to be self-perpetuating and self-justifying since it drives a steady stream

of recruits into the ranks of the ruthless Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

But even here the Poles manage to give the reader a sense of the insecurity that lies behind this tragically ill-judged reaction. "The general staff," they write, "have been scared by the collapse of 20th-century political orders nearby, including the Iranian monarchy, the Soviet Union and the Yugoslav federation. They feel strongly that Atatürk's state faces the same threat. Negotiating with ethnic Kurdish rebels is out of the question, they say, pointing at the break-up of their socialist neighbours once the ethnic genie was out of the bottle."

Of course the reference to "unveiling," coupled with the name of Atatürk in the subtitle, involves a deliberate double entendre, but a perverse one in the light of recent developments to which the book devotes ample space. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the republic's founder, did actively discourage the veil and even banned women from covering their heads in public buildings. But now veils and headscarves have blossomed on urban and even middle-class women, whose mothers would not have dreamed of wearing them 10 or 20 years ago. "Turkey re-veiled" might almost have been a more appropriate title.

Those headscarves are the most visible aspect of a public reassertion of Turkey's Islamic identity which has been one of the most striking, and most contentious, features of the last few decades, and has now moved to the very center of Turkish politics.

The Poles finished their book soon after Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the neo-Islamist Welfare Party, took office last year at the head of a coalition government. Like many other "Turkish-

Islamic synthesis" which would enable Turks to escape from a dangerous polarisation between secularists and Islamists.

Alas, it had if anything the opposite effect. Although Erbakan, knowing he was in office rather than in power, avoided any direct challenge to secularism, the mere fact that his government did not fall apart in its first few months was enough to cause panic in the establishment, prompting the armed forces to intervene overtly in the political process, egged on by many intellectuals and politicians who sincerely think of themselves as democrats.

Now his government has fallen, while the forms of parliamentary democracy have been preserved. Much of the Turkish elite has breathed a huge sigh of relief, but this may well be premature. While it is true that Erbakan's government must have been a disappointment to his supporters, he has managed to avoid responsibility for any unpleasant economic decisions and can argue that others prevented him from carrying out his programme. And whatever his own feelings on the matter, many of his supporters are bound to conclude that democracy, at least in its present form, has nothing to offer them.

So the book ends on a slightly more hopeful note than its authors would probably have struck if they were finishing it now. It is none the less very timely, in that it makes these worrying developments much more intelligible, and gives one a sharper insight into the hopes and fears of Turks on both sides of the argument. ■

Financial Times Syndication

## The inevitable happened

FINALLY THE inevitable happened: Jerusalem became the tragic site of death and mayhem. Despite everyone in the Arab world and Israel knew that it is a matter of time before such a tragedy happens, the Israeli police chief came out with an amazing statement that there was no intelligence information indicating the possibility of such an attack.

One does not question the abilities of the Israeli security, but it's important to point out the dangerous self-righteous attitudes that permeate the current Israeli cabinet and the forces serving under it. There seems to be an almost disbelief on the part of Mr Netanyahu, with all the policies he has pursued till recently, how the Palestinians, and the Arab/Israeli worlds do not understand his point of view.

Countless people have warned about the consequences of those. His Majesty King Hussein, whom despite his optimism for the region's future, does not conceal his concern about the stalemate in the peace negotiations, and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan has often warned the international community about the desperate grounds in which the politics and economics of despair are borne.

The efforts of the Hashemite leadership in this respect are the manifestations of the King's vision for a region built on moderation and diversity, complemented by the Crown Prince's aspirations for an area to be developed on the basis of dialogue and pluralism.

So, if we are optimistic here, in Jordan, about the realization of an eventual lasting peace between the Arabs and the Israelis, it is because we need to build our region on different basis, and there is no place for pessimism on this track. We do have our disappointments, but we have to remember that, our Palestinian brothers rely on our support in their struggle to realize their aspirations.

We have our historic responsibilities to the West Bank. Whether it is the Israelis, or anyone else, it must be understood that Jordan is not a bystander, that waits for results. We have signed an honourable bilateral peace, but are committed to a comprehensive and lasting settlement.

New ideas to move the peace process are needed. The credibility of the negotiators and the catalysts in the formula must be enhanced. It is a positive for Mr Ross to be back, and if Mr Albright comes as well, it will certainly indicate the seriousness of the American efforts.

The Europeans can play a more active role, but most importantly, Arab countries with relations to Israel must activate their efforts to produce tangible results at each step of the process.

We cannot afford to sit back pessimistically, and say that the peace process is dead, for if we reach that stage, it means that we all, as Arabs, wash our hands from the Palestinian question, and leave them to subject poverty and more death and destruction. Mr Netanyahu will then have a truly free hand in creating helpless Palestinian enclaves, that are dependent, on the Israeli cheap labor market, or emigration to other parts of the world for financial security. In this way, we hammer the final nail in the coffin of our region, and helplessly wonder into a bleak and precarious future.

It is important for the US and the EU to pressure Israel. It is also important for the Arab partners to discuss with the Palestinian leadership, candidly and openly, those issues which can best be overcome by trust and good intentions, without allowing the whole peace issue to become a hostage to circumstances. The issue between the Palestinians and the Israelis, is not that of "narrowing a gap, but rather of a fundamental difference in perception. The Israeli notion of security, must include concessions on territorial grounds. And for the Palestinians, grounds must be enforced with proper security. ■

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Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

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Letters to the editor: Will be edited for brevity, must contain name and address of sender.



## Business scene

■ The Arab Academy for Banking and Financial Sciences organizes this month five training programs for Arab bankers, involving credit supervision, new financial tools, investment strategies, behavior skills, banking institutions and evaluating bank's performance through computer usage. These training courses are held in Amman, Cairo and Cyprus. The program on analyzing banking performance via computers, in addition to conducting fiscal and administrative reports will be held on 16 August in Amman. Added to this, there is another course dealing with investment strategies that discuss risks of foreign currency exchange, joint international loans and other long-term market operations.

■ Pretax profits of the Arab Banking Corporation (ABC) hit \$94 million during the first half of this year, compared with \$88 million in the same period last year. In a statement released by the ABC, statistics showed that its operations over the first six months of this year rose from \$1.7 million to \$11.7 million in the same time last year. ABC assets recorded a growth of \$23.2 billion against \$21.5 billion in 1996.

■ A group of three leading companies specialized in organizing exhibitions, is busy preparing for the ever biggest trade expo to be held in Jordan. The Amman International Trade Expo is to be held in the Amman International Car Show, between 9-15 August. Suhail Salah from Expo Jordan says that about 40 large companies are taking part in the expo representing many countries such as Palestine, Oman, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Italy in addition to local concerns and agents. Invitations were sent by the organizers to many businessmen, Arab, Asian, and European chambers of trade to participate in the venue.

■ The Higher Planning Council has approved the licensing of the setting up of 21 firms at a total capital of JD 32 million. These mostly small and medium sized firms are being established in the seven governorates of the Kingdom.

### Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 6 August

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US\$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.1510	1.1568
DM	0.4124	0.4145
¥	0.4801	0.4825
₹	0.1227	0.1233
₦	0.5624	0.5652
₪	0.3667	0.3685
₹	0.0419	0.0421

# Stock brokers feel AFM privatization will revamp the market

By Ilham Sadeq  
Star Staff Writer

**SHARE DEALINGS** at the Amman Financial Market (AFM), for the last two consecutive weeks, recorded their highest since June 1995. The main factor behind such a rise was the continuous upward trend led by Arab Bank shares which reached JD 295-291. Official index closed at 165.8 points, two weeks ago.

This was also encouraged by the government's measure to remove restrictions on foreign ownership in economic sectors in Jordan.

However, by the beginning of last week and during this week, the official index remained stable at 165 points.

Dealers attribute the instability in share dealings to the mid annual companies' results, that will definitely determine the course of stock prices. Daily transactions were stable at about JD one million.

The latest resolution approved by the Cabinet to transfer the Amman Financial Market (AFM) to a private bourse is targeted at organizing the securities and capital market and protect investors from practices of fraud.

This step comes as a result of approving the securities new law few months ago.

In order to fulfill this goal, a special committee was formed for securities dealings to monitor the market and guarantee safe dealings for investors. The AFM will then be directed by accredited brokers from the private sector.

The committee is presided by Dr Michael Mario (deputy governor of the Central Bank of Jordan) and Hisham Al Tal as vice president, while Dr Tayseer Abdul Jabbar, Maher Wakid and Abdul Hamid Al Hayari, as

members of the committee.

So far, the AFM is operating on a combination between a supervisory role related to enlisting dealers and brokers, on the one hand, and the executive task including the stock exchange operations on the other hand. But, a separation will be made between these two duties of the AFM since the new committee will handle the monitoring task.

The formation of the new committee is a first step of the government's measure to privatize the AFM, a policy which was applauded by share dealers, local, and Arab investors as well as foreign investment funds. Many investors expressed their satisfaction with the expertise of the people chosen to lead this process which they believe will be able to make real changes in the market.

Investors are willing to pump \$500 million in the market by the end of this year. This is divided as follows:

- \$100 million trade bonds for the Jordan Phosphate Mines Co., (covered completely last week).
  - \$200 million, doubling the capital of the Housing Bank.
  - \$100 million, bonds from the Central Bank of Jordan.
  - About \$50 million, international listing of Potash shares.
  - About \$50 million, the increase of capitals of the Union Bank, Jordan Bank, the Jordan-Kuwait Bank.
- Also, this sum could be higher by \$100 million when the government starts implementing its latest decision to increase the ceiling of non-Jordanian investments.
- Mohammed Al Bilbeisi, president of AFM Brokers' Association says that many

pressing tasks are to be met by the new committee, mostly related to setting up instructions for issuance and register of securities. Such instructions, he adds, are needed by about 40 general shareholding companies that are awaiting to raise their capitals through capitalization of their reserve or circulated profits.

"When the new board is chosen for the bourse, it will be in charge of giving instructions and organizing dealings and listing, while the committee's role will be restricted to supervising the whole process," says Al Bilbeisi.

He added that, for the first time in Jordan, a deposit securities center will be established to register, transfer ownership of securities and settle their prices.

The committee has a transitional period of two years starting from the date of the release of the law, this period will serve to convert the Market's operations to be run according to the new securities law.

Director of the United Financial Investments Co., Nassir Al Ahmad stresses that cooperation is imperative between the committee and the brokers who represent the securities stock exchange, so as to exchange views and expertise and improve the capital market.

Abdul Al Mutaleb Abu Hijleh, a broker, is content with the formation of the securities committee, which he describes as highly competent because it combines between banking, financial and legal expertise.



According to the new securities law, shareholding companies are obliged to disclose their balance sheets on quarterly basis. Such a measure will make investors and dealers in stocks in direct contact and more aware of the fiscal status of companies. Moreover this will help investors to feel that their capital is safe and will stop fraud in share buying. Al Bilbeisi says.

The securities law which replaces the old AFM law aims at finding solutions for the noticeable decline in the financial market in Jordan and activate share dealings.

It also seeks to institutionalize the capital market, organize relationship among all sides involved in stock market and separate the supervising role of AFM from the bourse.

In addition, the new law plans to expand the concept of securities to contain (in addition to shares) bonds issue, securities deposits, investment funds and units, settlement contracts (short and long term), also buy and sell agreements and shareholding bonds.

The securities committee will start its work as soon as a Royal Decree is issued, to give the green light to start.

# US reluctantly drops objections to trans-Iranian gas pipeline

By Dan Morgan and David B. Ottaway

**WASHINGTON**—The Clinton administration has decided not to oppose a \$1.6 billion pipeline that would carry huge quantities of Central Asian natural gas across Iran, the first significant easing of the economic isolation of the Tehran regime, according to US officials and other sources.

The 2,000-mile pipeline project, now undertaken with Iran's first participation in any major international energy project since the 1979 Islamic revolution there. That upheaval and the seizure of American hostages led to US sanctions and a long, international campaign by Washington against Iran's fundamentalist government for allegedly supporting terrorism.

The pipeline would carry gas from Turkmenistan on the eastern side of the Caspian Sea across a 788-mile stretch of northern Iran to energy-needy Turkey and, eventually, to Europe. One official said the Clinton administration does not endorse the pipeline but has concluded that such a project "does not technically violate ILSA," the 1996 Iran-Libya Sanctions Act.

The law bars US and foreign investments of more than \$40 million in the development of Iran's energy sector, but does not address pipelines carrying another country's gas or oil across Iran, the official said.

Iran would reap a portion of

transit fees for allowing the gas to flow under its territory, and sources indicate the pipeline eventually might also transport Iranian gas.

In part, the administration's decision to go along with the pipeline reflects the heightened priority now given to helping the independent former Soviet states of Central Asia assert their independence from Russia. The Caspian Sea region holds the largest oil and gas reserves outside the Arabian Gulf, but, historically, Moscow has looked on these resources as a long-term reserve for its own needs.

Russia has been the traditional market for Turkmenistan's gas reserves, the world's third largest. For that reason, a trans-Iranian pipeline would advance a major goal of US policy to provide multiple outlets for Caspian energy reserves that do not run across Russian territory, US officials noted.

One oil industry representative likened the complex geopolitics involved in establishing pipeline routes for the landlocked Caspian to a "three-dimensional chess game."

Administration officials made clear that they would prefer non-Iranian routes for the pipeline, such as a pipeline under the Caspian Sea to Azerbaijan, and then west to Turkey.

However, one official said that under the 1996 sanctions law, "we don't have the tools to do anything about (a trans-Iranian line)." Some former

and current US foreign policy officials also argue that acquiescence in the pipeline serves as a gesture of reconciliation toward Iran following the recent election of a relatively moderate president.

State Department officials testifying in Congress last Wednesday took a firm stance against Western investment in Iran's domestic oil and gas industry, citing their success in blocking foreign investment in 11 Iranian projects. Non-US firms that violate the restriction can be blocked from doing business in the United States, a provision that has caused friction between the US and its European allies.

Iran has agreed to finance and build the portion of the pipeline passing through its territory. No US firm is now involved, although a company chaired by former secretary of state Alexander M. Haig Jr. drew up plans for a similar project for the Turkmen government before dropping out two years ago under White House pressure.

Several European energy firms stand to benefit directly from construction of the pipeline. Three European companies—Italy's Snamprogetti, Gas de France and Shell Oil Co.—hope to form a consortium to build the trans-Iranian pipeline, except for the portion actually in Iran, Turkey's energy minister said earlier this summer.

Industry analysts expect other companies such as Mobil Corp., which has a production-sharing contract in

Turkmenistan, to profit from any opening up of the landlocked country.

However, any perceived concessions toward Iran risk stirring passions in Congress at a time when US investigators are looking into a possible link between Iran and the bombing of a US military compound in eastern Saudi Arabia that caused the death of 19 American servicemen last year. Congress and the Clinton administration subsequently imposed tough new sanctions on Iran, the latest escalation in the long-running feud between the two nations.

Prominent former foreign policy officials recently have advocated a new approach, utilizing economic and diplomatic incentives to entice the newly elected Iranian government into a dialogue with the United States. Among them are two former national security advisers, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Brent Scowcroft, and a former assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs, Richard W. Murphy.

The administration's acceptance of the trans-Iranian pipeline "means there is some easing in our policy toward Iran," said Zalmay Khalilzad, director of strategic studies at Rand Corp. and a former Reagan administration foreign policy official. "The question is, can you stop at this? Will it just lead to more pressure to allow Iranian gas to go to Turkey, too?"

Turkey signed an agreement in May to purchase Turkmenistan gas after the Clinton administration voiced strong objections to an earlier \$23 billion Turkish-Iranian gas deal. Administration officials publicly assert that Ankara's agreement with Turkmenistan will assure Turkey's reliance on Turkmen rather than Iranian gas.

However, Marc Grossman, former US ambassador to Turkey, said in a recent speech to an energy conference in Istanbul that Turkish officials asserted the pipeline would carry Turkmen gas "for the first few years." The phrasing suggested it may eventually transport Iranian gas, which is currently unable to reach Turkey or Western markets, partly because of US sanctions.

An oil industry source familiar with the project said the deal actually involves "a swap of gas," an arrangement in which Turkmenistan would pump its supplies into the Iranian pipeline network and Iran would send an equal amount to Turkey. The new pipeline will intersect an already existing Iranian one, making

such a swap possible. This meshing of Iranian supplies into an international network helps explain Tehran's support for the project, according to several industry sources.

The pipeline initially would carry 3 billion cubic meters a year of Turkmen gas and an equal quantity of Iranian gas, according to press accounts from Ankara. Eventually, the amount could rise to 30 billion cubic meters, three times Turkey's current annual gas consumption.

The development of Turkmenistan's gas reserves is intricately tied to a larger administration plan to open the Caspian Sea's vast pool of oil and gas. Tapping into these reserves represents no serious technical challenge. But finding pipeline routes to foreign markets has turned into a diplomatic challenge with interests affecting Russia, China and Iran, and their relations with the United States. Adding to the political complexity is the fact that almost all the possible oil and gas pipeline routes run through territory wracked by still-unresolved ethnic or religious conflicts.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

## Business Chronicle

### Aqel denies economic recession

ACCORDING TO government officials, Jordan's economy is gradually becoming more prosperous because of its success in moving forward in its economic reform program that was launched in 1989. This is, of course, in corporation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The program's core focuses on major distortions in Jordan's economy. These include the deficits in the trade balance, balance of payment and the budget. The deficit in the budget was cut to about 4.6 percent of GNP.

In addition, the deficit in the current account was cut to 3.1 percent of GNP, while the shortage in the trade balance went down from 42 percent in 1995 to 34 percent last year.

These indications are seen by economic experts as reflecting the new prosperous trend in the country. This is despite the fact that some analysts object to these improvements who claim that what is happening today in Jordan (flation of prices, privatization and globalization for a free market economy) kills people's hopes and ambitions and the right to lead a decent comfortable life.

Those who disagree with this, reiterate that the situation is critical and stress that something should be taken urgently to stop the intervention by outsiders such as the IMF to impose their conditions on us and take the most benefit from the whole reform process.

However, Regional Director in the Arab Bank, Mifteh Aqel stresses that through the implementation of the economic reform program, Jordan's economy has managed to remove many distortions. He denies that there is an economic recession.

Aqel argues that manufactures and businessmen who never stop complaining about the decline in their profits, attribute it to recession. They must be mistaken. There are other causes behind their losses, such as competition from imported cargoes to local products and the duplication of similar products from commercial and industrial companies, he argues.

This is the case in the production of vegetable oil, for example. These plants that produce this material operate at a capacity that is four-folds of the actual domestic need. What this really implies is that building a new oil factory will badly affect existing factories and cause further losses.

As for outside competition, Aqel says that this creates many problems for local manufactures. He called on them to review their cost schedules, improve quality and increase their expertise to cope with the external challenges. Speaking on the ongoing discussion about the high rate of unemployment in Jordan as an index of economic recession, Aqel admits that this does exist only among a certain professional groups, in which supply is more than demand. However, he adds, there is a shortage of labor in other areas of work such as technical skills, financial management and industry. The main reason for unemployment according to Aqel is that many Jordanians are reluctant to join certain jobs, and only concentrate on what they call respectable ones.

## JWICO Home furniture with style

THE JORDAN Wood Industries Co. (JWICO) is well known for top quality products and commitment to the customer. In the middle of this year, JWICO introduced new standard products in line with European specifications.

The company's General Manager and CEO Mr. Najeib Qube'en, said JWICO was established in 1975 at a capital of JD 240,000. Originally it was in partnership with one of the largest Danish companies manufacturing wooden doors (Jutlandia). JWICO first produced interior doors in 1977 and continued broadening its production line to include exterior doors and anti-fire doors.

In 1979 JWICO began exporting doors to Iraq, and doubled production in 1980. In 1982 it was turned into a public shareholding company at a capital of JD 1.5 million.

In 1986, it started manufacturing house and office furniture and kitchen boards. The company also opened a showroom of 1000 cubic meters in Mecca Street to serve customers directly.

Mr. Qube'en added that in 1995, and as a result of the big increase in customers' demand, JWICO began to widen its establishment, and increase production, introducing new designs to customers, using the latest technology to give high quality products at reasonable prices.

These innovations increased sales to neighboring countries. JWICO exports rose by 440 percent in the first half of this year compared with the same period of last year. This meant a sales increase from JD 104,000 to JD 560,000.

New showrooms for agents and customers were opened in Dubai, Al Riyadh, Jeddah, Beirut, and Nazareth. JWICO also plans to open showrooms in Gaza and Ramallah.

## Nahas Travel and Tourism rides waves with Japanese Airlines

JAPAN AIRLINES in Jordan is represented by Nahas Travel & Tourism—a leading travel agent and tour operator that was established in Amman in 1972.

In 1980 Nahas Travel & Tourism became the General Sales Agents for Japan Airlines. Since then, the local agent developed close contacts with Japanese companies.

Nahas officials visited Japan several times to promote Jordan as "Tourist Country."

These proved fruitful. The agency provided the first charter ever from Fukuoka city in Japan to Amman on December '92; on board were 226 Japanese tourists who visited Jordan and other countries around.

Japan Airlines is considered the number one airline in the world in terms of its 747 fleet size. They have 85 jumbos.

Also Japan Airlines was the first Airline in the world to introduce the personal video on 1 February 1989.

With a fleet of 142 aircrafts, Japan Airlines fly to 64 cities in 29 countries—JAL's average international departures from Japan per week is 440 flights.

The number of JAL flights over Siberia (TS)



Mohammad Hajazi, general manager of Nahas Travel

is 50 flights a week and over the Pacific (to the United States that is) 104 flights a week.

JAL's first operation from Tokyo to Europe via Anchorage, USA was on 6 June 1961.

JAL was founded in 1951 and in 1987 it was privatized.

The number of international passengers carried by JAL for the year ended on 21 March '97 reached 11,490,014 with an increase of 6.4 percent over the year before.

Domestic passengers carried were 18,777,390 also with an increase of 3.9 percent.

Total number of uplifted passengers, 30,197,904 an average increase of 4.8 percent over last fiscal year.

Japan Airlines and Royal Jordanian had filed a commercial agreement in 1981 for special prices to and from Japan with both airlines via points in South East Asia (Bangkok/Singapore) and via in Europe (London/Frankfurt/Paris/Amsterdam/Madrid).

After the opening of the new Kansai Airport in Osaka in 1995 Royal Jordanian obtained the right to operate to Osaka but did not start operations yet.

## MARKET WATCH 2-5 August

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY		TUESDAY	
Stock	%	Stock	%	Stock	%	Stock	%
Nahas	6.00	Jordan Sea Line	4.96	Elroy Ready Wear	5.11	Elroy Ready Wear	4.86
National Salinity House	4.92	Wooden Industry	2.56	Tourism Transportation (ETT)	5.00	Jordan International Trade	3.77
Jordan Commercial Facility	4.67	Arab Phosph. Center	2.27	United for Transport Planning	4.65	Middle East Phosph.	3.23
National Chron	4.57	Wooden Industry	4.84	Jordan Financial Investment	3.23	Tajico	4.84
Arab Trading	4.26	Universal Chemical Industry	4.80	Arab Financial Investment	2.27	Vehicles Owners Federation	4.35
Amman Cairo Bank	4.39	Vehicles Owners Federation	4.17	National Engineering Industry	1.89	National Engineering Industry	3.85
General Price Pointer	166.596						
Trade Volume	2620022						
Stock Volume	1441874						
Highest Traded Stocks	1500000						
Arab for Hotels		East Project	68.132	Jordan Cement Factory	133000	Jordan Cement Factory	86.872



# AROUND TOWN

## Nazzal becomes president of Jordan Hotels Society

MR MICHEL Nazzal has become the new president of the Jordan Hotels Society. Mr Nazzal received 28 votes out of 44 cast in the election to the head of the council of the society. Members of Three, Four and Five Star hotels also got voted in to the council. These included Sami Sawalha, Nader Shalhoub, Issam Fakher Al Din, Salim Al Dajani, and Abd Al Aziz Al Kabarti. ■



# Inner life of Arab sculpture is reborn

By Hala Shaker  
Special to The Star

"WORK, TORMENT, and hope are what make up the history of the human race on this planet. Cherishing the memory of this history, making it known and providing its cultural content with a worthy framework—this is the duty of each and everyone of us," says Oscar Niemeyer, the famous Brazilian artist.

It has long been an Arab sculptor's dream: to congregate together and bring out the rich diversity and skill of their work. Today, this dream has become a reality.

Forty prominent sculptors from six Arab countries are meeting together for the first time at the Jerash Festival. Their collective exhibition of superbly constructed pieces takes place currently at the Cave of Zeus. This first encounter is a great artistic and cultural event. There is a parallel symposium of sculptors, researchers in esthetics and architecture at the Baladana Art Gallery in Amman. From Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt these people are meeting to interact and discuss contemporary Arab sculptures and espouse it to the general public.

Mrs Suad Hourani, director of the Baladana Art Gallery and the originator of the encounter said that she had been preparing for more than a month. It is special in the sense that it is the first collective of diverse Arab sculptures.

Mohammad Hajiras a distinguished Egyptian sculptor said the encounter is a very good beginning. "It is a birth of a great idea we have longed for since the 1950s." He added that artists are always in need for such encounters, saying that "their coming together changes the direction of the Arab artist. It also breaks the bars of isolation and solitude which constitute a dilemma for Arab artists in our modern society." After all Arab sculptors have to come together to improve.

Seven Egyptian sculptors from different generations are taking part in the event. Hajiras, a long time sculptor, dealt with the dilemma of the Arab human through his five displayed graven figures like the Martyr's Kiss, the Caravan proceeds, Motherhood, the Enclosure, and La (No). This last work stands for the man in the Arab



world who is in constant revolt against this ugly age, says Hajiras.

The other Egyptian sculptors, Naji Farid, Hazem Mistakawi, Hazem Abdel Khaleq, Jamal Abdul Nasser, Salah Hammad, and Hamdi Attieh, belong to the younger generation. Their works exude creativity and power that are rich in diversity, techniques and subjects shedding light on modern Egyptian sculpture.

Palestinian Zaki Salam said "I wish there were more participants from Palestine." Sculpture is the art of settlement and stability, Salam points out; but Palestinian sculpture suffers from the lack of stability and live under circumstances of removal. Because of this Palestinian sculptors turned to other forms of art.

Salam's seven bronze works and one wooden figure seem at a first glance realistic. He used a

technique which represented a significant means of expression. Salam says that the axes of his approach is the expression. "I rely on the inner expression of man, joy mingled with inner tension, and other feelings of the people surrounding me. The statue is not merely the state of man it must provide a visual dialogue with the surroundings," Salam said.

Syria was represented by four remarkable artists. Mustafa Ali's seven bronze works are about the contemporary Syrian myth. Lutfi Rahim executed his figures in marble. But together with Aktham Abdel Hamid, both deal with abstract themes. Rabee Al Akhrass' iron works on the other hand tend to be more expressionistic.

Jordan also has a full contingent with 10 sculptors. Their works were individual initia-

tives according to the mass flood of events and images.

Muna Saudi, Mohammed Issa, Samia Zaru, Larissa Najjar, Abdelhal Mussilam, Nazih Oweis, Ahyd Younes, Abdelaziz Abu Ghazaleh, Khaled Hamzeh, and Maha Abu Ayyash have all a range of diverse works in subject and in style.

Muna Saudi the well-known artist employed a powerful technique. Taking a mere glance at her art one perceives the widely mature handling of stone and gets the strong impression that she is a fervent lover of her country, as one critic said. What attracts the attention of the eye and the feeling in Oweis' works is the ability to move the spaces through his strong and close relation with the material he uses.

And Abdulhay Musallam's artistic subjects range from folklore to glorious tales.

Inside the Cave of Zeus one also meets shining images that are overshadowed by the Monument of Liberty in Baghdad.

Iraq's participation is the largest. There are 13 artists of three different generations who have created their sculptures with the help of their inner desire to reveal their spiritual beings. These include Ismael Fatah, Karim Khalil, Ali Rasan, Hadi Abbas, Iyad Sadeq, Salman Radi, Laith Fattah, Khaled Izzat, Nateg Al Alousi, Amer Khalil, Murtada Hadaad and Sabah Fakhraddin.

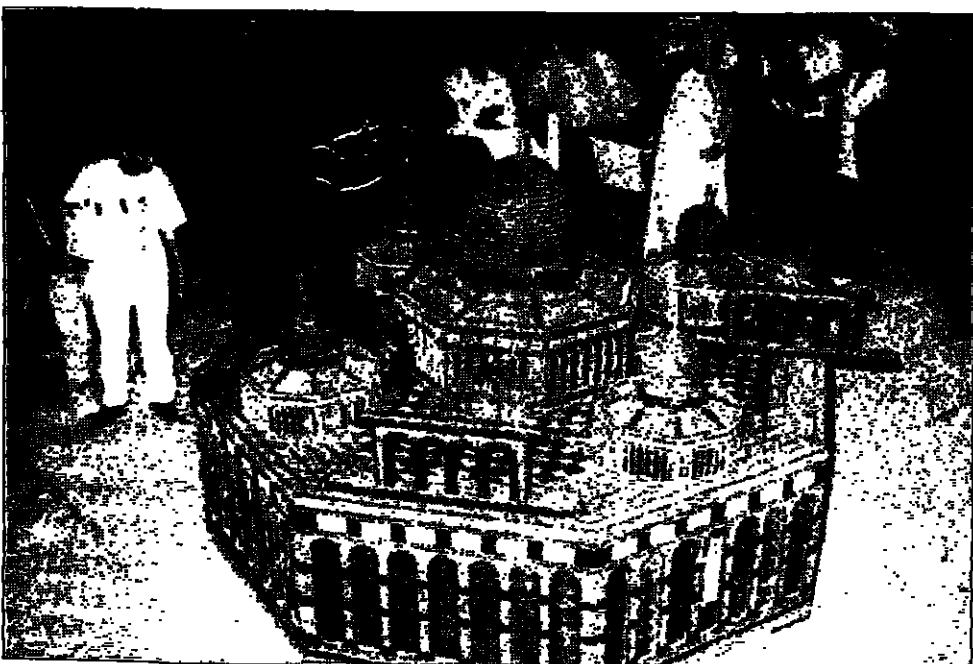
The inquiring Iraqi images are not after finding the eternal answers. They are listening to the deep Sumerian inscription that carries wisdom and provides the sanctity of life. Iraqi sculptures like prayers, have long hidden treasures that keep them away from any unified social or cultural interpretation.

The sculptors reveal their inner will to achieve as much as they can of every penetration into the Iraqi identity which is concealed under the dust of wars and immigration.

Lastly is the participation of five prominent Lebanese sculptors.

Salwa Rawdha Shukayr, Izzat Mezher, Samer Mogharbel, Naim Thobal, Izzat Hamam. All are united by the presage of creativity and the desire to be united with the material of sculpture. Their works are about modernity in form and in subject. ■

# Dome of the Rock lights through indigenous artwork



By a Star Staff Writer

WHILST WALKING along the Colonnade of the Jerash ruins, your amazement never ceases with the surrounding creativity and wonderful architecture of the ancient city of Jerash.

On the footpath you could also see how modern man succeeded in giving the Roman city a touch of modern beauty. Regardless of all that is presented on the theaters and the handmade artwork along the decorated sides of the Colonnade, a unique model of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem's Holy Places challenges the atmosphere of the ancient Roman.

The model captivates the visitor to the extent that he sometimes forgets he has another performance to get.

The model is a miniature replica of the Dome of the Rock. Its framework is made of strong plywood and inlaid by half a million olive and date kernels.

With different colors of lights that shine through its 99 windows, the model permeates a true to life but sad picture of the mosque of the Dome of the Rock.

Jordanian artist Ghassan Ayassrah said the model took him three years of hard work and 6000 working hours, which caused him a lot of pain.

"The idea started on 16 May 1993 and completed on 10 April 1995," Ayassrah, 31, said. "The day it was finished was a remarkable day in my life."

The model is about two meters high and weighs over a ton.

Friends and relatives in Jordan, Arab and even foreign countries who knew about the project started sending kernels to the artist. They used to be sent either through mail or by travelers.

The windows of the mosque was made of colored glass mosaics, the colors were brought from Syria.

The 99 holy names of Allah is written on top of the 99 windows of the model. The artist used shaving blades, eggshells and fodder seeds.

The kernels are shaped in a very artistic way, you can say how the artist used different size kernels. These of course depended on the angle that the painter was working on.

Ayassrah wishes artists in Jordan to be given more support. "I wish to have the opportunity to establish my own gallery and travel with my art around the world." ■

# Hani brings Arab song back on track

IT IS the distinctive voice that pulls in the crowd. And Hani Shaker is no exception. Indeed his serenade at Jerash last week proved a spit firing occasion to revamp the South Theater.

Being a popular Egyptian singer that is known all over the region, Hani was the ever consummate. In fact he is credited with bringing the so-called Arab song back on track. It was no more Arab pop, if that's what it can be called. Hani sang songs that resembled the echoes of Um Kalthoum, Abdel Halim Hafez and Farid Al Atrash.

And everybody loved it. The stage was packed on all three nights that he sang. This is the first time that Hani sings at the Jerash festival. Judging by his performances, it won't be the last.

On a number of occasions he reduced the audiences to tears because of the way he sang and the contents of his songs that concentrated on humanity.

His song Al Quds was very emotional both for him and his audience. In fact he was so carried away that at the end of the song, he chanted "Palestine", "Palestine", with the audience repeating after him.

In the Arab world, politics is an overwhelming force that engulfs society. When asked, Hani said that he will never sing in the Arab territories so long as it is under Israeli occupation. ■



Hani Shaker

# Final week dawns at Jerash

Thurs. 7/8/97

- South Theater: Kathim Al Saher—Iraq
- North Theater: Janii Braso-vulul—Romania
- Artimes Theater: Sakher Hattar—Jordan
- Sound & Light Theater: Karak Folk Group

Fri. 8/8/97

- South Theater: Nawal Zughbi—Lebanon
- North Theater: Janii Braso-vulul—Romania
- Artimes Theater: Jordanian Artists Association—Jordan

Sat. 9/8/97

- South Theater: Nawal Zughbi—Lebanon
- North Theater: Baroque Orchestra—Canada
- Artimes Theater: Jordanian Artists Association—Jordan
- Sound & Light Theater: Irbid National University

Sun 10/8/97

- South Theater: Nawal Zughbi—Lebanon
- North Theater: National Music Conservatory—Jordan
- Artimes Theater: Jordanian Artists Association—Jordan
- Sound & Light Theater: Philadelphia University Group

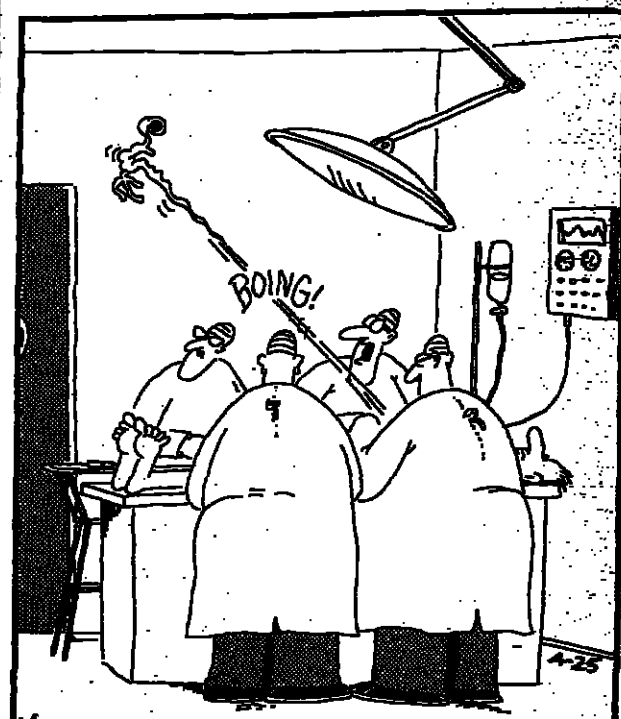


## THE FAR SIDE

By GARY BASEMAN



"Dang! That dog's been up on the sofa again, Hank. I just know it!"



"Whoa! Watch where that thing lands — we'll probably need it."



High drama at the Arthropod Trade Center

## SLAPSTIX

My idea of a good television mystery is one where it's hard to detect the sponsor!

© 1997, Tribune Media Services

## New boss for BA in Jordan

BRITISH AIRWAYS has appointed Mr. Mark Hodson as manager of its office in Amman and assumes his duties 7 August. He is taking over from Fiona Hamilton who takes a new job in the Czech Republic.

Mr. Hodson said he is very pleased to work with the British Airways team. "I am glad to have the chance to continue with my contribution to the airline. I believe that the growth and prosperity in the fields of business, travel and tourism in the region are quite promising. We are ready to meet the requirements of development in these fields."

Mr. Hodson is not new to the region. The nature of his previous job as a training director in the sales department gave him the chance to work extensively in the Middle East region in general and in Jordan in particular. ■



APPEARING IN THE STAR

Brazil still faces

Free Ama

Deterred by the absence of ease the Amazon h... rainforest rem... ard. Brazil is h... urgency to exp... in Africa and... places tropical

Amazon... Length of the Amazon R... Drainage area: 6,475,0... Distance from the port of... 1,610 kilom... Seating capacity of the... 1,000... Distance from the... can travel 3,700 kilom... Pope...

Amazon... Estimated number of... 35,000... Estimated number of... Amazon basin: 4... Biggest fish: Piraraca, wh... 10 feet and 250 lb... Worldwide loss of rainforest... Indonesia, Brazil, ... Percentage of forest cover... of the US...

مكتبة الشاه



AUGUST 1997  
A special section offering  
fresh perspectives on  
global issues prepared for  
The Star

# THE WORLD PAPER

PRINTED IN FIVE LANGUAGES  
ON FIVE CONTINENTS



APPEARING IN: AMMAN • BANGKOK • BEIJING • BOGOTA • BOMBAY • BOSTON • CAIRO • CARACAS • HONG KONG • JAKARTA • KARACHI • KUALA LUMPUR • LIMA • MANILA • MEXICO CITY • MOSCOW • PANAMA CITY • QUITO • SAN JOSE • TAIPEI • TOKYO

Brazil still fascinated with mega-projects and short-term profits

## Free trade killing the Amazon's economy

Deterred by the complexity of the issues and the absence of easy solutions, Western interest in the fate of the Amazon has waned in recent years. But the giant rainforest remains as threatened as ever. Its major steward, Brazil, is beset with economic ills that lend more urgency to exploitation than ecology. And Brazil's peers in Africa and Asia are setting an example that clearly places tropical forests at the service of development

By Carlos Castilho

**T**UIRA, A BRAZILIAN INDIAN from the Caiapo tribe, is again sharpening the big knife—known locally as a *terçado*—that got the world's attention in 1989. It was then that she threatened to cut the throat of Jose Antonio Lopez, a high ranking government official, during a protest against the proposed construction of a dam in the Amazon basin's Xingu river.

The reason the Caiapos are once again singing war songs is the Brazilian government's decision to allow a second attempt to build the dam, 8 years after the World Bank aborted the operation by canceling previously approved loans to avoid further damages to its public image. The concession for the Carao dam (ironically the word is a Caiapo war cry) will be offered to private investors in 1999 as part of a highly controversial plan to build nine new hydroelectric plants in the Brazilian Amazon. If completed, these dams will provide a combined 1.55 million megawatts of electricity and cost approximately US\$12 billion.

Dams are the most recent in a long list of chronic headaches faced by the successive Brazilian governments as they try to reconcile their stewardship of the Amazon with the economic needs of voters. Approximately 80 percent of the 5 million people living in the

2.7 million square kilometer area are now city dwellers, most of them subsisting in extreme poverty. The 300,000 gold prospectors roaming the Amazon basin have been affected by the steady reduction of the alluvial reserves of the metal, and many have turned to drug dealing.

While there are some signs of change (see sidebar), Brazilians don't have a good record when it comes to managing the Amazon.

The country's fascination with expensive mega-projects and short-term economic gain continues unabated, and most of the available evidence points to a troubled future for the world's biggest rainforest.

For instance, the Amazon basin has 20 percent of all drinkable water of the world and accounts for 16 percent of the water flowing through all rivers in the world, according to a United Nations study citing data from the World Resources Institute. But bad management is undermining the immense potential of this watershed to meet human needs—pollution from the mercury used by gold miners is making the water unsafe even for fishes.

A Japanese study released last March showed that the harvest of fish from the Amazon has dropped by 50 percent in recent years. Exports of some prized species such as the pira-

mutaba—a delicacy for Japanese consumers—have fallen from \$12 million a year to a mere \$2 million.

The future of the Amazon as a freshwater fishery could suffer further damage from a series of projects to make its rivers navigable.

The first of these big waterways came into service last March. When fully operational, it will carry some 300,000 tons of soy beans annually from the central part of Brazil to the port of Manaus through the Madeira river. There are four other waterway projects under study in the Amazon that, according to experts, will increase erosion of the fragile soils along river banks.

Meanwhile, deforestation is again in the headlines. Paulo Nogueira Netto, one of the leading environmental academic experts, says that tree cutting of the Amazon forest has grown since 1994 after a much-trumpeted 50 percent reduction in the annual rate during 1992. Approximately 1.2 million hectares of natural forests have been cut down each year since 1995, according to Nogueira Netto. "It's like deforesting one Lebanon a year," he says.

During the past dry season, weath-

er satellites spotted 95,000 *queimadas* (fires) in the 7 million square kilometers of the Amazon jungle. This rate is almost the same as in the 1980s, when farmers' "slash and burn" approach deforested an area the size of Massachusetts every year. But if the area lost is the same, the practitioners have changed.

"Amazon deforestation was usually associated with the struggle for survival by poor peasants, but now it is just the opposite," says Philip Fernandes, a US-born researcher at the Brazilian Institute of Amazon Studies in Belem. "The economic growth since the 1995 stabilization plan has led big farmers to increase the pasture area for cattle. The purchasing power of the Brazilian population grew by 20 percent, mainly among low paid workers."

The government's effort to monitor the *queimadas* short-circuited in 1995 when an international scandal paralyzed its plan to set up a \$1.7 billion network of sophisticated radar stations. The radar stations are essential to guiding the small planes in charge of spot-

ting fires and coordinating their efforts with the land units in charge of chasing and fining the farmers. The network is also important for the military and commercial air safety, but it's been on hold for almost two years since Brazilian congressmen discovered that the selection process of suppliers was plagued by fraud.

Raytheon, a US corporation, is in the eye of a storm which involves accusations of spying and covert work to eliminate the competing French consortium, Thomson-Alcatel. If these charges can be resolved the network, known by the acronym of SIVAM (Amazon Vigilance System)—13 stations scattered in the forest—will collect and process data gathered by radar, satellites and infrared sensors able to detect not only the *queimadas*

and river pollution, but clandestine airstrips used by drug dealers. The sophisticated monitoring system has been approved by the Brazilian congress but is now stalled in the courts.

The SIVAM scandal put the Amazon issue back in the international arena,

**"Amazon deforestation was usually associated with the struggle for survival by poor peasants, but now it is just the opposite"**

mixing old actors like army officers, strategic experts and spies, all of them very active in the area in the 1960s and 1970s. During those years, Brazilians were frightened by the so called "internationalization" of the Amazon region. Nationalistic emotions were aroused by the fear of losing control over a quarter of the nation's territory to foreigners. At the same time, Brazilian military dictators wanted full control over the region to avoid Vietnam-style guerrillas operating there.

► KILLING THE ECONOMY PAGE 2



"I don't think she's a surveyor...": despite the attention of Western environmental groups, economics are shaping the Amazon's future

### Amazon by the numbers

Indigenous people in Brazil in 1990: 5,000,000

Indigenous people in Brazil in 1996: 325,000

Percentage of indigenous people who live in the Amazon rainforest: 60%

Length of the Amazon River: 6,280 kilometers

Drainage area: 6,475,000 square kilometers

Distance of the port of Manaus from the sea: 1,610 kilometers

Seating capacity of the Manaus Opera House: 1,600

Distance from the sea a ship with a 14-foot draft can travel: 3,700 kilometers, to the Peruvian port of Iquitos

Population living along the Belem-Brasilia Road in 1960: 200,000

Population along the road in 1970: 2,000,000

people: 2,000,000

cattle: 5,000,000

Estimated number of species in the Amazon basin: 1.6 million

Estimated number of flowering plant species in the Amazon basin: 55,000

Estimated number of fish species in the Amazon basin: 3,000

Biggest fish: Piracatu, which can reach 10 feet and 250 lbs

Worldwide loss of rainforest, 1981-90: Top five countries and share of total

Indonesia, Brazil, Malaysia, Zaire, Colombia: 85.3%

Percentage of forest cover cut down by settlers in the New England region of the US between 1650-1850: 75%

Forests must serve needs of people and development

## Indonesia shuns Western example

By Prapti Widinugraheni

**I**NDONESIA, THE CUSTODIAN of the world's second largest rainforest, has no qualms about the largely Western "green movements" and their message. But the country's leaders insist that the environmental values these "greens" espouse for the forests of Southeast Asia, Equatorial Africa and the Amazon Basin be imposed equally on all forests.

Indonesian ecology expert Otto Soemarwoto says that regardless of what global environmental movements believe, Indonesia considers its forests as a resource whose "highest and best" use is the development of the country.

Comparing Indonesia's rainforests with Brazil's in the Amazon, Soemarwoto says the major difference between the two is the small population that the Brazilian government has to deal with in the Brazilian rainforests. "Indonesia has a huge population, even in the forests. These people can't live by relying solely on (the most developed island of) Java; they need to live from their forests as well," he notes.

Soemarwoto says that although Indonesia, as well as the governments of the Amazon basin, are often pressured into doing what was considered "best" for the forests by global environmental movements, Indonesia has its own concept of how to manage its forests.

"We can't apply (environmentalists') suggestions just like that. Adjustments need to be made... What may be a success story for one country may not work for Indonesia," he states.

Soemarwoto, who is also a former professor of environment at the Padjadjaran University in Bandung, West Java, says, however, that Indonesia is determined not to repeat the mistakes of North American and European countries that have logged their forests to an unreparable extent.

"There is nothing wrong with regarding forests as a 'global asset,' but it should apply to all forests, both tropical and non-tropical. It would be unfair to consider only tropical rainforests as a global asset while irresponsible logging continues in temperate forests," he observes.

Indonesia's Ministry of Forestry currently records 143 million hectares of land in the country as forested lands,

of which 49 million hectares (34 percent) are totally protected areas, meaning that timber exploitation is totally prohibited.

The remaining 94 million hectares

is permitted; and convertible forests, where clear cutting or maximum timber utilization is allowed so the area can be used for non-forestry purposes such as for plantations and housing areas.

Despite the specific designations for each part of the country's forests, violations by forest concession-holders still occur. Minister of Forestry Djamiludin Suryohadikusumo last year revoked the concessions of three companies because of their failure to manage their forests in an environmentally-sustainable manner. All told, a total of 116 concessions have either been revoked or unextended since the government began allowing private sector participation in forestry-development activities.

Indonesia currently has 488 concession-holders, down from 550 in the early 1970s.

Regarding this issue, Jeffrey A. Sayer, the director general of the Center for



Managing a "global asset" the US way: clear-cutting of temperate forests provides Indonesia with fuel for its argument that Western nations need to clean up their own acts before giving advice on rainforest management

are divided into limited production forests, where selected felling is allowed; regular production forests, where selected felling or clear cutting







# The Star's GUIDE

## Programs on JTV from 9 - 16 August

### ENGLISH PROGRAMS

#### SATURDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
2:10—Twinkle  
2:30—Wishbone  
3:00—Blue Heelers  
3:30—World of Geo  
4:00—The Vally Between  
4:30—Tik  
5:00—French Programs  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Neighbors  
8:00—The that Bind  
8:30—Prison  
9:10—Time Trax  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:30—Feature Film  
12:00—Ellen

#### SUNDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
2:10—Cartoon  
3:00—Energy Express  
4:00—American Chart Show  
6:00—French Programs  
7:00—News in French  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Fresh Prince of Bel Air  
8:00—Cinema, Cinema, Cinema  
8:30—National Geographic  
9:10—Renegade  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:30—One West Waikiki  
11:15—Sisters

#### MONDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
3:10—Cartoon  
3:30—Gillette Sports Special  
3:30—Deep Water Have  
4:00—Animal Show  
4:30—Ocean Girl  
5:15—French Programs  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Neighbors  
8:00—Murphy Brown  
8:30—Babylon 5



Renegade, Sunday at 9:10 pm

#### TUESDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
3:00—Square Show  
3:30—Dog House  
4:30—The Album Show  
5:15—French Programs  
7:00—News in French  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Coach  
8:00—Tik  
8:30—Encounter  
9:10—Nature of Things  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:30—West Beach  
11:15—Mini Series

#### THURSDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
2:10—Cartoons

#### WEDNESDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
2:10—Cartoons  
3:00—Global Gardner  
3:30—Spell Binder  
4:00—Monsters Today  
4:30—Border Town  
7:00—News in French  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Neighbors  
8:00—Soldier's Diary  
8:30—Oprah Winfrey Show  
9:10—Spencer for Hire  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:25—Land's End  
11:00—American Gothic

#### FRIDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
2:05—Cartoons  
3:00—French Programs  
4:00—Family Matters  
4:30—NBA  
6:10—French Film



### Amman cinemas

- Philadelphia I (Tel: 634149):  
The Lost World (Jurassic Park)
- Philadelphia II (Tel: 634149):  
Liar Liar
- Plaza (Tel: 699238):  
Phenomenon
- Concord I (Tel: 677420):  
Michael Collins
- Concord II (Tel: 677420):  
Spacejam

7:00—News in French  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Neighbors  
8:00—The Health Show  
8:30—Hawkeye (Drama)  
9:10—Drama Series  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:30—Mini Series  
12:00—Feature Film

### PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS

#### SAMEDI

5:00—Les Mondes Fantastiques  
Emission de jeux pour les jeunes  
5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres  
6:00—Des Unions soviétiques  
7:00—Le Journal  
7:15—Magazine L'oeuf de Colomb

#### DIMANCHE

5:00—Qui est qui ?  
5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres  
6:00—Magazine  
Faut pas rêver  
7:00—Le Journal  
7:15—Magazine pour tous Ziva

#### LUNDI

12:15—Film : Les bottes de sept lieues  
5:00—Qui est qui ?  
5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres  
6:00—L'intégrale  
7:00—Le Journal  
7:15—Magazine scientifique Cinq sur cinq

#### MARDI

5:00—Qui est qui ?

### Highlight of the week at the Pleasure Dome

● First First love, first kiss, first car...it's all part of the **BOOK OF LOVE**  
Who wrote the book of love? Not Jack Twiller (Chris Young), whose hilarious efforts to impress the prettiest girl in the school lead to disaster. Whether throwing wild parties, imitating James Dean, or "streaking" through the neighbourhood with his outrageous friends, Jack will do whatever it takes to win the illusive girl of his dreams. But in his obsession for the prom queen, he overlooks the one girl who really appreciates his unique charm. Boasting a classic rock-and-roll soundtrack and an irresistible young cast, **BOOK OF LOVE** is a comic chapter in the life of a hormone-stricken teen who suffers all the hilarious humiliations of adolescence, but finally finds that growing up isn't all that bad!

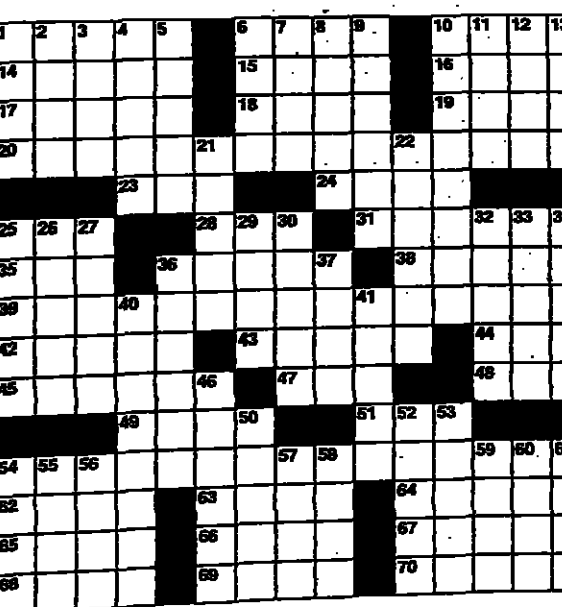


### Video Releases

- **Bad Moon:** Full moon, crescent moon, quarter moon, each is a Bad Moon for Ted Harrison. By day, he's photo journalist enjoying a stay with family in the pacific north west. By night, he trans figures into a horrific half human-a ware wolf.
- **Critters 2:** (The Main Course) Their hair balls from outer space, are back for seconds. In no time, eggs are popping open everywhere-a field full of live stock becomes a gigantic feeding ground, and local residents are disappearing by the mouth full. Can the bounty hunters from deep space wipe out the critters before an American town is erased from the map?
- **Fly Away Home:** Inspired by a true story, this film tells the story of an orphaned child who stumbles on orphaned goose eggs. Nurturing the baby geese does not mean she can teach them to fly, or does it? Fied out in this terrific family fun.
- **Mermaids:** the attractive Mrs. Flax (Cher) does not exactly lead a settled life. Whenever one of her romances fails, she moves to another city. That happened so far 18 times. Cher, her daughters Charlotte (Wynona Ryder) and Kate (Christina Ricci) and Cher's new romance (Bob Hoskins) put together a very enter training romantic comedy featuring the Choo Choo song.

Courtesy: "The Pleasure Dome"  
Tel: 676538 - Fax: 5538087

### CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- ACROSS
- Yogis' targets
  - Major work
  - Simpleton
  - Speller about
  - Craving
  - Curtain or maiden
  - A Peron
  - Zone
  - Eightfold place
  - Water, nor any drop to drink
  - Stampy
  - London site
  - Outdoor bank info
  - Indistinct
  - Limited
  - Spelling
  - Ladies
  - point center of attraction
- DOWN
- Brando classic
  - Actress Erin
  - Modern
  - Charlotte or Emily
  - A Peller
  - Thesaurus entry: abbr.
  - Force
  - Corn unit
  - Statement of pessimism
  - Knife
  - Gambling town
  - Sharp
  - Fork part
  - Surrounded by
  - Show again
  - Lake
  - Fountain
  - Sesame
  - Street name
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### —THIS WEEK'S— HOROSCOPE

By Linda Black

**Weekly Tip:** Group activities and team play will flourish. Even couch potatoes may find themselves climbing mountains and riding bikes.

**Aries (March 21-April 19).** Gather in the money. Put your massive intelligence to work to solve a work-related problem. Proceed with caution.

**Taurus (April 20-May 20).** Set your course. Be careful with your money and simply heed it. Your destiny seems apparent, but study is still required to get there.

**Gemini (May 21-June 21).** Finish up old business and put your mind at rest. Start something new, although you don't quite know how. Go over what you've done and assess the damages.

**Cancer (June 22-July 22).** Heed a friend's advice. Pay off an old debt. Keep a low profile. You're back in control soon. An old antagonist loses power.

**Leo (July 23-Aug. 22).** Take it easy. Organize your team so you can whip the opposition. Recuperate. No stressful activities allowed.

**Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Make a distant contact. Gemini will be talking freely. Find out whatever you want to know by asking.

**Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** Sign up for classes or a cruise. Work out a good compromise. You'll be exceptionally intelligent. Rest on your laurels.

**Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Review your finances so you can go shopping. Follow through on a commitment, but don't make any new ones.

**Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** You'll get a good argument or two out of your partner. That ought to be fun. Don't even bother to put up a fight. It's not worth the effort.

**Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** You're busy as a hive of bees. Sequester yourself with your paperwork. You can reach a compromise with your partner.

**Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Write up your latest research. You'll find all the right words. Do the edit. Let yourself be attracted by an opposite type.

**Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20).** Stay home and work on a household project. Finish it up, but don't start a new one. You and your sweetheart need to talk... alone.

**If You're Having a Birthday This Week:** You and your friends can make great things happen. Get them organized into teams.

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### Bridge

Thrust and Parry  
By Omar Sharif and Tannah Hirsch

Both vulnerable. North deals.

**NORTH**  
♠ A 6 2  
♥ 10 9 6 5  
♦ A Q 10 7 6  
♣ Q

**WEST**  
♠ 7 5  
♥ Q J 7 3  
♦ J 9 4  
♣ A K 5 3

**EAST**  
♠ J 10 9 3  
♥ K 2  
♦ 5  
♣ 9 8 7 6 4 2

**SOUTH**  
♠ K Q 8 4  
♥ A 8 4  
♦ K 8 3 2  
♣ J 10

The bidding:  
North East South West  
1♣ Pass 1♠ Pass  
2♠ Pass 4♠ Pass  
Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠.  
Many hands hinge on the ability of one side or the other to gain control of the trump suit. Follow the play of this deal.

Note that the Moysian 4-3 spade fit offers the only chance for game. Even so, we would have liked to see how the auction would have progressed had West made a takeout

double over the one-spade response. Assuming four spades could be made, East-West have a profitable save in clubs.

West led the king of clubs, then shifted to a trump. Declarer made a superb play to render the defenders helpless by playing low from dummy and allowing East's nine to win the trick! The contract could no longer be touched. Declarer can win any red-suit return in hand, arrange a club ruff on the table, then draw trumps and run diamonds for 10 tricks. (If East reverts to clubs, declarer ruffs in dummy, cashes the ace of trumps, then comes to hand with the king of diamonds or ace of hearts to draw the rest of the trumps.)

The defenders can wrest control of the hand easily enough. West should simply continue with the ace of clubs, forcing dummy to ruff. As long as East waits to ruff the fourth diamond, declarer will have to concede a trump and two hearts in addition to the club the defense has already banded.

What if, after ruffing the club, declarer ducks a trump? East wins and perseveres with clubs. No matter in which hand declarer ruffs, East must score another trump trick and a heart.

### Jumble

Unscramble these four words, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DONEM

WEJEL

STOLJE

FLATES

Answer: DONEM - JEWEL - ESTATE - TONEL



WHAT A VETERAN WEATHERMAN BECOMES.

### Would You Believe...

George Custer was only 26 when he received a field promotion to general during the Civil War.

President Abraham Lincoln was only one month into his second term when he was assassinated.

"The Lights of New York" was the first "all talkie" motion picture.

A baby develops only about 20 milk teeth.

The nearest galaxy to our own, Andromeda, is still 2 million light years away.

Canada has other countries beat when it comes to coastline. There are about 150,000 miles of coastline in the northern country. The United States has about 12,000.

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### Prepare for exams with the Swiss Center

THE SWEIS Educational Center (SEC) is run by a team of educators from several of Amman's most successful private secondary schools as well as from the University of Jordan and the USA. The center provides both test and college preparation for students.



The center offers a series of short courses that are designed to prepare students for examinations. Those specific subject areas which often prove difficult for a student can be mastered through the help of the SEC. This is by providing students with research skills and extended essays. The educational center can also provide assistance and guidance to students and parents seeking to select and secure admission to the right overseas university.

It offers courses for IB, A-levels, SAT II, and IGCSE Students in Biology, Business, Chemistry, Economics, English, History, Mathematics and Physics; this is including specialized preparation courses for TOEFL, SAT I, GRE, GMAT, and Tawjihi.

The Swiss Educational Center offers an array of helpful resources to supplement course work done in-class. Its resources include past-examinations, internationally renowned study guides for achievement tests as well as an array of overseas university resources. The resources are updated continuously to reflect changes.

Each student is carefully examined to monitor his/her abilities and progress. This allows for individualized study programs, assistance, and care. With SEC's continuous monitoring of its students through repeated examinations using real test questions, and SEC's multitude of resource, no student will be left behind.

The Swiss Educational Center offers several advantages over home tutoring. Its classes are small, so the student gets his/her share of individual attention. The opportunity to study with other students who are facing similar challenges provides stimulation for each student as well as a chance to pool their knowledge. Lastly, it is more economical for the parents in terms of time and tuition.

Rates are favourable compared with private tuition. Specialized courses such as research skills, extended essay preparation, and university counselling are offered on Thursdays. The fees for these courses vary and provided upon request. Private tutoring can also be arranged through the center. Courses have started this week and go on till 28 August. ■

# The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

## Online

at <http://www.arabia.com/Star>



# Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Relations israélo-palestiniennes

## Des bombes tristement prévisibles

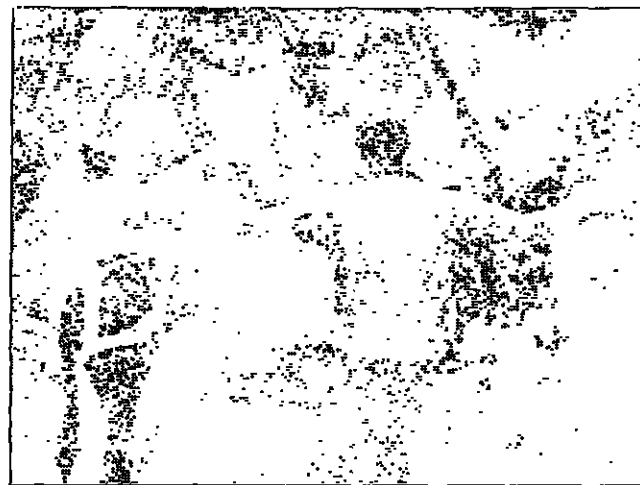
Responsables palestiniens et observateurs étrangers le craignent depuis longtemps. Le double attentat de Jérusalem qui a fait 18 morts et plus d'une centaine de blessés est en réalité l'aboutissement d'une série de provocations israéliennes.

### Les raisons

de ce nouveau débordement de violence sont évidentes. Depuis l'accession du Likoud au pouvoir, élu sur une base hostile aux accords de paix d'Oslo, le premier ministre Benjamin Netanyahou n'a pas raté une occasion de porter préjudice au processus de paix déjà en difficulté au temps du parti travailliste. La liste des provocations du gouvernement israélien est longue. D'abord, Netanyahou a mis du temps avant d'accepter de rencontrer Yasser Arafat, son partenaire obligé pour la paix.

Ensuite, le premier ministre a déclaré à plusieurs reprises vouloir introduire des changements dans les accords palestino-israéliens. Et puis il y a eu le percement du tunnel sous la mosquée Al-Aqsa, troisième lieu saint de l'Islam, qui a provoqué une soixantaine de morts. Il y a eu aussi la mise en chantier d'une colonie juive à Jabal Abu Ghneim. Enfin il y a eu toutes ces agressions quotidiennes et exaspérantes : les caricatures outragantes du prophète Mahomet et de la Vierge Marie, les destructions de maisons, la confiscation des cartes d'identité et plus récemment les affrontements d'Hebron où des Palestiniens sont tombés sous les balles de soldats israéliens.

La situation économique des territoires palestiniens n'arrange rien. Selon un rapport de l'Onu, ils auraient perdu 6 milliards de dollars en trois ans en raison du blocus, ce qui représente le triple de ce qu'a reçu en dons l'Autorité nationale palestinienne. Le climat est donc suffisamment empoisonné pour favoriser des actions désespérées, telles que ce



Le soldat israélien empêche le Palestinien et son âne de traverser Hébron. Depuis le double attentat-suicide de Jérusalem, les Palestiniens ne peuvent quitter leurs villes et traverser les territoires israéliens.

double attentat-suicide. L'Autorité palestinienne a malgré tout condamné ce double attentat et ses services de sécurité ont entrepris des rafles dans les milieux islamistes du Hamas en Cisjordanie et à Gaza.

### Hamas impliqué ?

A cet égard, Mohamed Dalhan, le chef de la sécurité palestinienne, répète que la coordination israélo-palestinienne en matière de sécurité est une des conditions du retour à la table des négociations. Or le gouvernement de Netanyahou continue de critiquer le manque de zèle des services de sécurité palestiniens, qui, selon lui, devraient jouer le même rôle que celui des milices israéliennes d'Antoine Lahad au Sud-Liban. Mohamed Dalhan estime pour sa part que

rien ne prouve l'implication du Hamas dans le double attentat de Jérusalem. C'est pour cette raison qu'un dirigeant du mouvement intégriste, Abdel Aziz Rantissi, a été interpellé à Gaza, puis relâché quelques heures plus tard par la police locale.

Les Palestiniens craignent en tout cas une dégradation de la situation. On leur interdit de se déplacer entre la Cisjordanie et Gaza et même entre les villes de Cisjordanie, qui se retrouvent isolées les unes des autres. Par ailleurs, la ville de Rafah a été fermée. Or elle est située sur une frontière égypto-palestinienne et n'offre donc pas de passage en territoire israélien. Les Palestiniens ont ainsi l'impression d'être mis au piquet par Israël.

De Gaza, Hassan Balawi.

## La doyenne Jeanne Calment quitte l'humanité à 122 ans

La doyenne de l'humanité, la Française Jeanne Calment, est morte à l'âge de 122 ans à Arles (sud-est) «de mort naturelle» dans la maison de retraite où elle vivait depuis douze ans. Ce petit bout de femme de 1.50 m et de 45 kg a connu 20 présidents français et en aura enterré 17, pleurs l'exécution du tsar Nicolas II, vu la naissance et la mort du régime communiste et traversé deux guerres mondiales. Née à Arles le 21 février 1875, sous la IIIème République, cette fille d'armateur suit des études secondaires jusqu'au brevet avant d'apprendre la peinture et le piano. Un an après la naissance du cinéma, à 21 ans elle épouse son cousin Fernand Calment, propriétaire d'un grand magasin de tissus. Grand-mère dès 1926, elle se retrouve veuve seule au fil de sa longue vie. Après son mari en 1942 et sa fille unique, son unique petit-fils mourra dans un accident de la route, en 1960.

Le Livre Guinness des records la reconnaît en 1993 comme doyenne de l'humanité. Un homme au moins n'aura pas pu s'en féliciter : le notaire qui lui avait acheté en 1977 sa maison d'Arles et qui est mort en 95 sans jamais en devenir propriétaire. De Vincent Van Gogh, qu'elle a croisé à la fin du 19ème siècle à Arles, elle disait qu'il était «bald comme un pou». Elle a toutefois participé à 115 ans au tournage d'un film consacré à l'artiste. Six ans plus tard, elle a même sorti un disque, Maître de la vie, où elle s'improvise chanteuse de rap ! Devenue presque totalement aveugle, sourde et impotente, Jeanne Calment (notre photo), toujours coquette et gourmande, était chaque année son anniversaire en présence de journalistes venus du monde entier. Désormais, l'homme le plus vieux du monde est un Américain d'origine danoise qui fêtera son 115ème anniversaire le 16 août prochain dans un foyer de retraités près de San Francisco.



Elections

## Dialogue sans issue entre l'opposition et le pouvoir

Trois semaines après l'appel au boycott des élections législatives, lancé par les Frères musulmans, les tractations semblent au point mort. Dans l'opposition, les partis restent divisés sur la position à adopter. Le gouvernement, lui, refuse toujours toutes concessions.

«Il n'y aura pas de dialogue sauf s'il s'agit de l'intérieur supérieur de la Patrie». Depuis cette récente déclaration du roi Hussein, les partis de l'opposition n'ont jamais été aussi divisés sur la tactique à suivre. Certains (y compris les islamistes) exigent carrément l'abrogation de la loi électorale dite de «la voix unique», sinon ils boycotteront. D'autres veulent au contraire participer au scrutin et pour cela ils sont prêts au dialogue avec le gouvernement. Autrement dit ils ont l'intention de négocier.

Cette division aurait pu être évitée. Salem Nahhas, secrétaire général du parti Hachd (de gauche), a trop réclamer le boycott des autres partis, les aurait effrayés. Ils ont alors saisi cette occasion pour adopter une position médiane de «participation conditionnée» - comme ils l'appellent - pour ne pas être aux basques des Frères musulmans.

Côté gouvernemental, on ne ferme pas la porte du dialogue mais on reste ferme, c'est-à-dire indisposé à faire des concessions. Les déclarations du premier ministre Abdel Salam Majali après ses différentes visites à l'étranger vont dans ce sens. Le ministre de l'intérieur Nazir Rashid a d'autre part laissé entendre que les citoyens, de tous les courants politiques, étaient en train de s'inscrire massivement pour les élections : une manière d'insinuer que le boycott des islamistes n'a aucun effet sur la population.

De ces prises de position naissent des prévisions pes-

mistes. Pour la célèbre députée-observateur politique, il est préférable pour le gouvernement que les islamistes participent aux élections, quitte à faire des concessions car l'enjeu est de taille. Si le pouvoir en place ne les prend pas en compte, leur courant extrémiste pourrait avoir recours à l'action clandestine ou même à

la violence. Personne ne souhaite bien sûr la répétition du cauchemar algérien en Jordanie. Déjà, un dirigeant du Front d'action islamique, favorable à la participation au scrutin de novembre, propose une conférence générale du mouvement islamique pour examiner l'ensemble de la situation politique et pas seulement la ques-

tion des élections. De son côté, le rédacteur en chef du Doudmour a appelé à une conférence nationale entre le gouvernement et l'opposition car «tout le monde est en crise dans ce pays». Qui l'emportera ?

Suleiman Sweiss

## Le dernier examen des électeurs

Pendant que les coulisses du pouvoir bruisent de déclarations et de contre-déclarations, la démocratie suit son cours. L'établissement des listes d'électeurs s'achèvera à la mi-août. D'après les estimations gouvernementales, à prendre avec des pincettes, 1,5 million de personnes pourraient voter le 4 novembre prochain.

Avant de pouvoir voter dans leur nouvelle circonscription, les électeurs ont dû changer de domicile devant avoir l'accord des comités examinateurs.

Depuis samedi dernier, les comités d'examen sont entrés en jeu. Jusqu'à la mi-août, ils sont chargés d'établir les listes définitives des électeurs pour les prochaines législatives, fixées officiellement par le gouvernement au 4 novembre. Leur travail prend trois formes :

1. Entériner les demandes de transfert de bureau de vote. Cela concerne toutes les personnes qui ont changé de domicile et qui souhaitent s'inscrire dans leur nouvelle circonscription. Elle ont eu tout le mois de juillet pour formuler cette demande, qui est maintenant examinée par les comités.

2. Supprimer des listes les personnes qui n'ont plus le droit de voter. Il s'agit par exemple d'individus qui ont été condamnés pour des crimes de droit commun. Les comités d'examen, pour établir cette «liste noire», se renseignent auprès des tribunaux et de l'état civil.

3. Inscrire les jeunes électeurs qui ont eu 18 ans avant le 31 juillet dernier. Ces opérations d'enregistrement sur les listes électorales demandent toute une série de justificatifs. Le casier de famille par exemple est indispensable pour s'inscrire. Autant de tracasseries administratives pas toujours faciles à saisir. Plusieurs habitants d'Amman et de Jériché se sont ainsi plaints d'une procédure jugée compliquée et fastidieuse. Dans certains villages, on ne trouvait pas de photomaton pour fournir les photos d'identité pourtant exigées par les bureaux d'inscription.

Su.S.

## Nouvelles du Pays

Vacances

## Les Jordaniens rêvent de quitter leur pays

En France comme dans le royaume hachémite, l'été, c'est la période des vacances scolaires. Mais contrairement aux Français, les Jordaniens n'en profitent pas vraiment. Et rares sont ceux qui partent à l'étranger. Question de temps mais surtout d'argent et de tradition.

C'est traditionnellement sur les plages d'Aqaba que se retrouvent les Jordaniens pour prendre du repos.

Associé à la détente, à la paresse, au plaisir ou à l'aventure, le mot «vacances» représente tout un monde d'espoirs aux yeux des enfants et des adultes. Les clichés qu'on ne cesse d'entendre et de répéter, comme «bien-être des vacances», «nous partons en vacances» ou «que faites-vous pour les vacances ?», font partie de notre quotidien le plus banal. Mais à y bien réfléchir, qu'entend-on exactement par ce mot ? Pour les occidentaux, les vacances, c'est l'aventure, la découverte d'un nouveau pays. Souvent, les gens, les étudiants notamment, travaillent dans le seul but de partir à l'étranger.

En Jordanie, en revanche, les vacances sont rarement liées à des destinations lointaines. L'idée même de voyage, sans quitter pour autant son pays, n'est pas un but en soi. Pourquoi ? Pour une question d'argent tout simplement. Plus de 80% des Jordaniens n'ont pas les moyens de se payer un

voyage à l'étranger ou même de partir à la découverte de leurs propres richesses touristiques. Pendant leurs 15 petits jours de congés payés, ils descendent parfois à Pétra mais le temps d'une journée seulement. Passer quelques jours dans un hôtel d'Aqaba avec toute sa famille devient tout de suite plus compliqué.

### Vacances en famille

Pour Khaled, jeune employé de banque, programmer ses vacances n'est pas l'une de ses priorités : «En ce moment, je suis en train de faire des économies pour pouvoir me marier dans deux ou trois ans. Alors, les voyages, j'oublie !», déclare-t-il sur un ton sarcastique. La situation est différente pour Omar, le fils gâté : «Papa est riche : je peux donc faire ce que je veux».

Et puis il y a le poids des traditions sociales. Ici, les parents ne laissent pas toujours leurs enfants étudiants se faire de l'argent de poche : les petits

## Les sacrées vacances des Français

Aujourd'hui, avec cinq semaines de congés payés, ils mettent un soin tout particulier à choisir leurs destinations et leurs activités estivales.

Environ 35 millions de Français partent chaque année en vacances dont 16% à l'étranger, en général vers les pays méditerranéens. Pour ceux qui restent fidèles au tourisme intra-muros «ils sont de plus en plus nombreux», la moitié choisit les bords de mer, plutôt que la montagne. Mais les vacances dans le terroir gagnent du terrain. Ces dernières années, les gîtes ruraux et les chambres d'hôtes sont devenus très populaires, le fin du fin étant de boire son bol de lait de vache tous les matins dans une ferme.

Traditionnellement les Français se font bégayer par la famille ou les amis sans oublier, que 14% de la population possède une résidence secondaire. Le tourisme culturel s'est aussi beaucoup développé. Les villes ont fait des efforts pour mettre en valeur leur patrimoine historique et la culture est devenue l'un des buts d'excursion estivale les plus en vogue : le nombre de visiteurs dans les musées et les festivals ne cesse d'augmenter. Les touristes et les agriculteurs proposent moins de vacances que les autres. Depuis quelques temps, cependant, les personnes âgées bénéficient de programmes de loisirs, financés par les municipalités ou des associations spécialisées. Enfin, un système de «chèques-vacances», en partie financés par les employeurs, a été créé pour aider les familles aux revenus modestes à partir.

Mais la récession économique n'a pas été sans effets sur les comportements des estivants. Ils choisissent désormais de réduire leurs séjours et recherchent un repos certes modeste mais surtout économique.

Le Jourdain

boulots d'été, pas avant d'avoir terminé les études. Alia étudie à l'université de Jordanie. Ses parents l'ont autorisée à travailler l'été pour gagner un peu d'argent mais pas question de la laisser partir en vacances seule ou avec des amis. «Cela réduit les occasions de partir à l'aventure, regrette la jeune fille, et nous contraind aux visites des pays voisins avec la famille».

«La Jordanie est un pays conservateur, avoue un père de famille, on tient à nos traditions et à nos coutumes. C'est vrai que de plus en plus nous essayons d'imiter les Américains mais nos deux cultures restent radicalement différentes. Ainsi les enfants restent tardivement dépendants des parents qui se chargent de toutes leurs dépenses jusqu'au jour du mariage».

Rana Kawar-Begayeen

## Fin du festival de Jérash : programme du 7 au 10 août

Au théâtre sud  
A partir de 20h30

7 août  
Le chanteur  
Kazim Al-Sahir  
(Iraq)

8/9/10 août  
La chanteuse  
Nawal Zugbhi  
(Liban)

Au théâtre nord  
A partir de 20h30

7/8 août  
Ensemble folklorique  
roumain  
les Junni Brasovului

9 août  
L'orchestre baroque de  
Montréal (Canada)

10 août  
L'orchestre du conservatoire  
national de musique de Jordanie

Au théâtre Artémis  
A partir de 20h30

7 août  
Le joueur de oud Sakher Hat-  
tar (Jordanie)

8/9/10 août  
Farhoud, fils de robin des  
bois, une comédie présentée

Le groupe folklorique roumain Junni Brasovului

par l'association des artistes jordaniens

Au théâtre Sons et Lumières  
A partir de 20h30

7 août  
Groupe folklorique de Ké-  
rak

8 août  
Le groupe local Los Morenos

9 août  
Groupe musical de l'université d'Irbid

10 août  
Groupe musical de l'université Philadelphie près d'Amman

Au théâtre Garasia

7 août  
20h00 Soirée poésie  
21h30 Duo piano et guitare  
(Jordanie)

8/9 août  
20h00 Une comédie locale  
Cinq mannequins et une  
femme

21h30 Le chanteur Ahmad Al-Faleh

10 août  
Cérémonie de clôture  
20h15 Le chanteur Ali Tantawi  
21h00 Le chanteur Khaled Yousef

La célèbre Nawal Zugbhi



## A chance to buy a bit of Cartier style

By Lucia Van der Post

FOR SHEER bravura, the 108-page mail order catalogue Cartier has launched to celebrate the 50th anniversary of its founding is hard to beat. Here we are in the supposedly tender, caring 1990s when the bad old spendthrift ways of the 1980s are meant to be over and Cartier comes up with a catalogue in which the least expensive item will set you back £530. A Les Must watch costs £925, a classic 18-carat pink gold ring set with diamonds £1,995, while some of the one-off designs, the grand set piece colliers, for instance, run out around £325,000.

But for those who have long nurtured an admiration for the designs produced in Cartier's heyday generally accepted by Cartier itself, as well as by auctioneers and collectors, to be the period from about 1900 to the start of the first world war when Cartier was establishing itself as a leading jeweller and fine object house, here is a chance to buy and own some of that design flair.

For almost everything in this anniversary catalogue is based on the old design traditions of the Cartier story. Here are pieces based on the brilliantly coloured Tutti Frutti style developed to suit the dazzling stones Indian maharajas brought over to be given the Cartier treatment.

The Tutti Frutti watches are the epitome of ingenuity like jewelled bracelets with the watch faces concealed behind baguette-cut diamonds or combinations of ruby cabochons and emeralds. Then there are pieces using the tiger and panther motifs so beloved of the Duchess of Windsor, rich gold and black lacquered pens with watches in the tops, matching lighters and Art Deco influenced lizardskin handbags.

All come in limited editions only in numbers that are weighted with historical significance for Cartier. Some of the designs are one-offs; some are made in editions of just three (representing the famous three-band rolling ring and the three Cartier shops in Paris, London and New York), others in batches of 150 (the age of the house of Cartier) and yet others in editions of 1847, the year it was founded.

A few of the most popular designs sold almost immediately, many sight unseen; bought straight off the catalogue pages. An exquisitely simple evening bag topped with a jewelled panther clasp, after the style of the designs the house did for the Duchess of Windsor, sold out its edition of three straight from the catalogue, at £30,000 each.

The sapphire and diamond collier (total of 690 sapphire beads and four Ceylon cushion-

shaped sapphires adding up to about 28 carats, as well as 89 baguette-cut diamonds totalling 32 carats) sold immediately, as did the 15 wonderful pens in 18 carat yellow gold with a watch in the lid (all at £14,150 a time), while all 150 examples of an elegantly simple platinum watch sold out at £14,400 each.

But there are plenty of fine examples left and anybody interested in buying into the Cartier style and wanting a catalogue of the Les Collections Privées de Cartier should telephone 0171-493 6962 for a (free) copy. It is beautifully sums up the Cartier style and the human skill, artistry and ingenuity that went into making them.

Beautiful as the items in the Collections Privées are, they pale beside the glittering beauty of the 227 archive pieces that have been put together by the British Museum and the Museum of Modern Art in New York to make an anniversary exhibition.

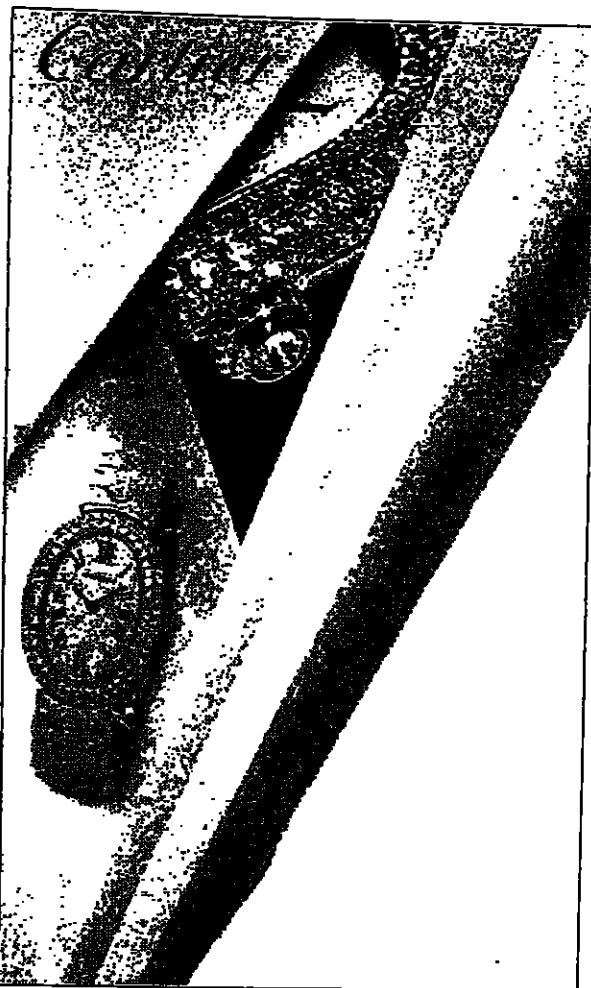
These are on show at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, but from October 1 until February 1 next year they can be seen at the British Museum. All the exhibits (which include jewellery, clocks and watches as well as objets d'art such as cigarette cases and vanity cases) are from the years 1900-39. All are historic designs from Cartier's most creative years and most are of quite stunning beauty: the cigarette cases in enamelled gold, agate, emerald, rubies and diamonds set in platinum, the jade mystery clock, the cigarette holder of jade, onyx and diamonds, the vanity cases in turquoise and pearl.

As David Warren, director of Christie's jewellery, puts it: "Any jewellery from Cartier's heyday is keenly sought after by collectors. In the first half of this century, Cartier's fantastic designs led the jewellery world and so today any sale of pre-war Cartier designs is more or less guaranteed to be a sell-out."

"We have held two Cartier-only sales (in 1992 and 1993) and both were a huge success with collectors around the world. Fortunately, these were Cartier's most prolific years so enough pieces came up to allow quite a few people to build a collection."

This is a wonderful chance to see these rare archive pieces. For those who cannot get to the exhibitions there is an appropriately sumptuous book, *Cartier 1900-1939* by Judy Rudoe (£50 hardback, £20 paperback) which tells the whole remarkable story.

Financial Times Syndication



## 'Guantanamera!' full of wit, wisdom, life

By Kevin Thomas

HOLLYWOOD— "Guantanamera!" is a screen valdictory most filmmakers would envy, a funny and poignant comedy unfolding on a trouble-plagued journey from Guantánamo to Havana. The film (unrated, in Spanish, with English subtitles) is a heartfelt expression of a love of life and a brave acceptance not only of the inevitability but the necessity of death.

With his health failing, Cuba's leading director, the late Tomas Gutierrez Alea, collaborated with Juan Carlos Tabio, an esteemed writer and director in his own right, on two final films, this one and "Strawberry and Chocolate."

Both show a Cuba beset by poverty and hardship, an economic system breaking down before our eyes. Yet at the same time, both films celebrate the Cuban people in their warmth, humor and resilience and both abound with a love of Cuba.

Gutierrez Alea, who died last year after a long battle with lung cancer, first made his mark in world cinema with his 1968 masterpiece, "Memories of Underdevelopment." It was a penetrating study of a handsome upper-middle-class man, not unlike Gutierrez Alea himself, who makes a last-minute decision not to flee with his family to Miami when Castro takes power and instead stays to see what the Communist future holds for him.

An early idealistic Castro supporter and a founding member of Cuba's respected Cinematographic Art and Industry Institute, Gutierrez Alea expressed in his films his attempts to embrace Marxism and his increasing disenchantment with its consequences.

"Guantanamera!," accompanied by the famous song on the soundtrack, involves a journey, one of the most ancient metaphors for the passage of life that, on-screen, has yielded such classic movies as John Ford's "Stagecoach" and Ingmar Bergman's "Wild Strawberries."

In "Guantanamera!," Carlos Cruz plays Adolfo, a government bureaucrat who has lost his standing. He sees a chance to regain it with a cumbersome gas-saving, cost-cutting scheme that would require that a horse be stopped at every town along the way to a burial destination to have its casket transferred into a local hearse (thus no given city would use more than its gas ration). When someone close to Adolfo dies, he finds himself at the mercy of the time-consuming system he has devised.

So many stops allow for much to happen, most significantly the continual crossing of paths of Adolfo's wife, Gina (Mirna Ibarra), and one of her former students, Mariano (Jorge Perugorria).

A respected and outspoken economics professor, Gina has given up her career in sheer frustration over

the state of Cuba and her sense of powerlessness to do anything about it and has resigned herself, more or less, to be a dutiful, traditional Latina wife.

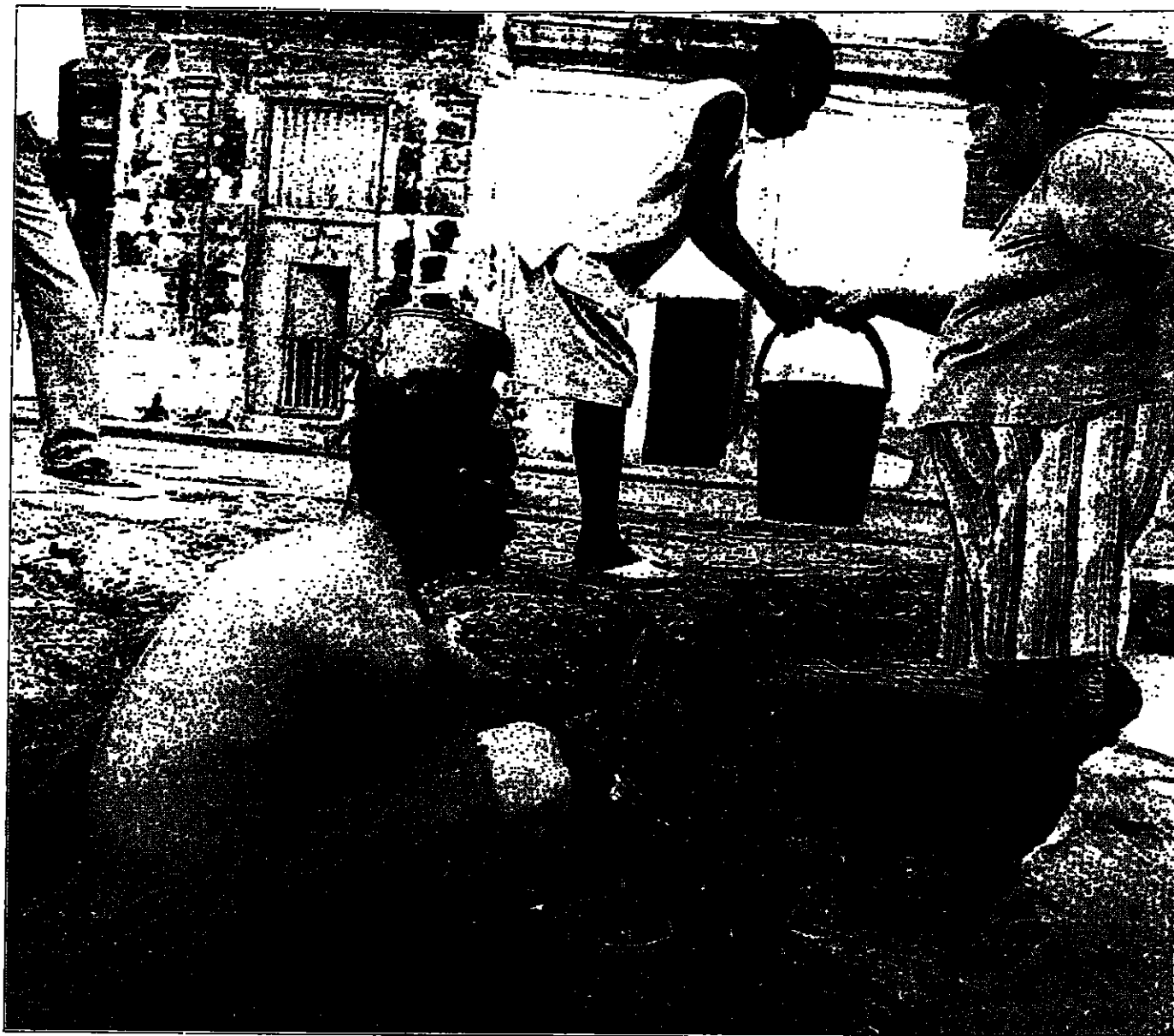
Mariano, who was smitten by his elegant professor and even once sent her a love letter (she was flattered but didn't respond), is stunned to see her again.

A truck driver, Mariano regularly travels between Guantánamo and Havana with his partner, Ramon (Pedro Fernandez), and is used to having casual sex along the way. But the handsome, husky Mariano is confronted with the emptiness of his life when he encounters Gina for the first time in several years.

A woman in her 40s, Gina is beautiful but worn; seeing Ramon again has made her look and feel young again. A family friend, Candido (Raul Eguren), traveling with Adolfo and Gina, warns her that he let his own life become "smaller and smaller." Gina sees a way out with Mariano, but will she take it?

Meanwhile, Adolfo becomes increasingly exasperated with the constant transferring of the casket from hearse to hearse.

Gutierrez Alea and Tabio recall Jean Renoir in their ability to embrace people in their love of nature and with all their flaws. Crucial to "Guantanamera's" impact is that the filmmakers are able to view Adolfo, despite his insensitivity and self-absorption, with compassion.



Despite poverty Cubans are depicted in the film as warm and resilient

Ibarra, Gutierrez Alea's wife of 22 years and his frequent leading lady, and Perugorria make Gina and Mariano as irresistible as the characters they played so memorably in "Strawberry and Chocolate." Perugorria created in the earlier film one of the most memorable gay characters in world cinema, a man who might be effeminate and at times flamboyant but is also a staunch character and principles. Here, Perugorria plays a rugged guy whose macho looks and behavior mask considerable sensitivity.

In "Guantanamera!," Ibarra is portraying a woman of dignity and superior intelligence forced to admit that her life is drying up on her.

We've met many Ginas and Marianos in films before this, but the direction, the writing and the acting combine to make them seem extraordinary here. What's more, the rest of the cast and their roles are up to the standards of the film's stars.

Funny, rueful, infinitely moving, "Guantanamera!" does not take its leave without a lovely touch of magic realism. And Gutierrez Alea has taken leave of us with a film that has a quality of abundance—of wit, affection and wisdom—that so often seems to have all bug vanished from the screen.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

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## INTERNET SPECIAL

THE STAR'S  
**WORKSTATION**  
COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Edited by Zeid Nasser

## Computer &amp; IT companies !!

Welcome to The Star's Workstation, the absolute source on what's hot and what's not in Jordan's IT market. Fax us on 648298 or email us at [Star@NETS.com.jo](mailto:Star@NETS.com.jo) with your news and views.

## 'Push Technology', the Internet's killer app

By Jabra F. Ghneim  
Special to The Star  
FORGET ABOUT the browser, the radical future of media beyond the Web is here.

Years ago, I used to watch a TV series starring Max Hedron. In this series, a "broadcasting" company of some sort controlled the world, through TV shows. It monitored its ratings every second. It could even monitor the effect a certain show would have on ratings. People were glued to their TV sets, watching shows customized to their exact interests and I couldn't, at the time, understand how and why. It seems that this kind of scenario may be upon us sooner than we expected.

"PUSH" technologies promise to fulfill this scenario. Those of us, who are Web addicts, now that the Internet is a chaotic place to be. We either surf aimlessly trying to satisfy our natural thirst and hunger for knowledge, or get URL addresses from the print media.

subsequent recommendations to overhaul and restructure the domain name registration system with the help of the ITU as was announced a couple of months ago. The IAB is also in charge of overseeing the documentation of standards and settling disputes between different work groups as well as acting as an advisor to the Internet Society.

It is ironic that while the Internet has steadily moved from being a strictly academic tool towards becoming highly commercialized through advertisements and electronic commerce. The people in charge of setting the standard protocols for its smooth sailing are volunteers. The *Economist* magazine suggested that it is high time to institutionalize these activities in a more structured and non-volunteer framework.

On another standards-related note, rumor has it that the IAB records its meetings on the US Letter papers and not A4 ones!

e-mail: [Abbassi@nets.com.jo](mailto:Abbassi@nets.com.jo)

Still, the experience is a waste of time. PUSH technology promises to change all that. The idea is simple. You feed information about your personality, preferences, habits, etc.



into a program, and "Web-casting" software "pushes" the kind of content you like your way. It can be in the form of a screen saver, or it could reveal itself once you connect your browser to your provider. With a Web-TV you can even browse like you do with your TV channels. Developments in communications which promise to give high bandwidth and optimal performance (ADSL, SDN, Satellite links, etc.) will change the way we receive and interact with media. These high speed mediums will make Internet inter-activity a reality.

So, there will be a lot of money to be made, and lots of thrills for us viewers/users.

That is why Microsoft is willing to lose millions of dollars on its venture with broadcaster NBC? It is also the reason why Microsoft spent millions to acquire a web-TV producer?

With PUSH technology media providers will be able to push the content you need or which pleases you, thus guaranteeing they have your attentive eyeballs for the longest time possible, which is exactly what advertisers seek. The delivery medium for the pushed content won't only be the Internet browser, which is expected to change in form.

Pushed content would be delivered through your pager, electronic organizer and PDA, a web-TV, and even your cellular phone. Some Arab countries are taking or have already taken the steps to establish the infrastructure needed to use this technology since bandwidth will basically make it or break it. We hope that other Arab countries can cut through the bureaucracy and do the same.

e-mail: [GhneimJ@go.com.jo](mailto:GhneimJ@go.com.jo)

## Internet News Batch

## NETS goes international

● NETS, Jordan's leading bulletin board service (BBS), has announced that users can now connect to the service from abroad via the Internet. All the travellers needs is a copy of FirstClass software. Once a connection is established with a local Internet Service Provider (ISP), users simply launch FirstClass which will take them to NETS right away.

Relatives and friends overseas can join NETS and all their communications with Jordan-based users will become local. In addition, users will be able to conduct chats with users from abroad on NETS, just as if they

were here. Contact NETS at 5510101 for more information.

● Bigfoot comes to Arabia  
● Arabia.OnLine has announced the launch of BigFoot Arabia, which is the result of an alliance with the leading provider of Internet and email directory devices, BigFoot.

This represents the first comprehensive email directory service to be offered to users in the Arab World.

The BigFoot Directory is one of the largest and most accurate databases for finding family, friends and colleagues because it includes the largest collection of Internet email addresses. Check it out at [www.arabia.bigfoot.com](http://www.arabia.bigfoot.com).

## INTERFACE

BY ZEID NASSER

## Will the Internet be broken up?

'ABSOLUTE INTERCHANGE without borders' is a slogan that Internet users are proud of. Well, from the looks of it, it is that same concept of non-limitations that may eventually result in the breaking up of the Internet into smaller, more regional or continental parts.

Problems are arising on the Internet, regarding the ownership of trademarks and trade names.

For example, if you wanted to create your own domain name you may find out that somebody is already using it.

In other words, somebody registered your name first with the central organization responsible for allocating domain names, called Network Solutions. If you, for example, registered a company which is called 'Integrated Basic Mechanics' as I.B.M. for short, then you would own the domain name IBM.com.

In such a case, IBM could not use this name on the Internet.

Just imagine how a huge company, whose name is internationally known, has to actually pay you money to give up the name. Many people who want to get rich fast can utilize this point and register the names of all sorts of companies, who will eventually want to get onto the Internet, to later on collect high fees for giving up ownership of these domain names.

Sometimes, these conflicts arise innocently, when two companies, one in Jordan and one in South Africa, for instance, have the same name and one of them registers it first. The result is that the other has to use another name!

Even governmental organizations could face this serious problem. Let's suppose that somebody in the USA has already registered Jordan.com. This means that our government cannot create a site including information on Jordan under that name. They would have to call it Jordan-sites.com or Jordan-net.com or anything else, other than Jordan.com.

Getting back to the effects of this on business, it is a serious problem, with huge legal consequences. After all, it is a company's legal right to use its name on any medium, if registered in its territory.

So, how can you handle a medium which is not limited by territory. Things even look set to get more complicated, due to plans to appoint 28 companies as official authorities for Internet domain names and registry.

Should the Internet not be so international. Will we reach a stage when the only way to regulate the 'electronic world' is by breaking it up into parts, in which you are allowed to use a name in your part or section, regardless if it is used in other parts. Will the Internet, as a result, even be broken up by country one day?

In such a case, every country or region will have its own World Wide Web which you log into separately through different routes. There wouldn't be a problem with email, because it can be routed easily from one network to another, pretty much like bulletin board services or server solutions today allow you to send and receive email from the Internet or other networks.

If the above were to happen, they 'inter' in the word Internet would be removed. I suppose the cool abbreviation we all use, calling it the 'net', may become real if the conflicts of interest continue or are not regulated properly.

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## Who sets the standards for the Internet? The Internet Board of Directors

By Jawad Abbassi

Special to The Star  
UPON ENTERING a book shop and asking for a stack of A4 white paper, the salesperson gives us what is needed and we go on our way, provided we've paid our dues!

The salespersons never, or should I say, ask us what we mean by "A4 white paper". This underlines the usefulness of standards, be they in the stationary world, shoe sizes or sun tan lotions.

Similarly, computers and networks need standard protocols to communicate properly. We log into our Internet accounts using various Operating Systems and applications; some people may use Eudora mail reader for the Mac OS, others use the Spy Mail for Windows 3.1, some others might use Netscape or Explorer and so forth. Nevertheless, these diverse applications still are able to perform the basic functions of receiving and sending email, which is solely because they all conform to the standard set for email exchange, Post Office Protocol Ver. 3 (POP3).

The same applies to the Internet mail hosts that also communicate and exchange mail for their users properly despite the fact that the hardware and operating systems

can range from Sun servers to Apple Macintosh. The standard protocol used in this case is the Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP). But who actually sets these standards and by what authority? To answer this question, a look at



the Internet Architecture Board (IAB) is necessary. While the word "board" might suggest a very formal body of highly paid executives dressed in Armani suits, the reality is much different. According to the official Web based profile of the IAB, the group of 13 people are volunteers drawn from the fields of academia, telecommunications and the computer industry.

The IAB members "meet" over phone conferences that

take into consideration the different time zones; in the past, all members were from the US, but now they span the world, from the US to Australia. The IAB oversees the work of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) and the Internet Engineering Steering Group (IESG) in proposing, drafting and adopting standards to be used on the Internet. Once a standard is adopted, suppliers of equipment can insure interoperability between their various products because they conform to the standard. The IESG—a group of specialists in various Internet related fields like computers and telecommunications—coordinates the work of the IETF which is established to assess and formulate new standards and the technical issues involved. The IESG is delegated the responsibility of initiating all action towards moving up a certain protocol to become an Internet standard.

Another very important role of the IAB is to coordinate the work of the IETF with other bodies active in information technology standards such as the ITU-T (which sets the modern standards). An example would be the setting up of the ad-hoc committee that discusses the management of Top Level Domain on the Internet and its

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## England coach says team can win without Shearer

LONDON—Although manager Glenn Hoddle has ruled out Alan Shearer out of England's two remaining World Cup qualifying matches against Moldova and Italy, he is still confident his men can win regardless.

"He (Shearer) won't be around for Italy or Moldova, that's for sure," Hoddle told Reuters on Tuesday after a news conference to announce a sponsorship deal.

The Newcastle striker told a news conference that he did not expect to be back before the New Year and Hoddle said even that could not be taken for granted.

"It is a blow," the manager had confessed earlier. "He's one of the best strikers in the world but the positive side for us is that it hasn't happened five days before the game."

The most recent evidence suggests that England can even do quite nicely without him up front.

"Last time we played Italy in the Tournoi (de France), Alan didn't play and we won convincingly," said Hoddle.

Shearer was rested during England's opening game against Italy of the four-nation Tournoi in France last June and despite his absence Hoddle's men won 2-0.

With Shearer, they had lost 1-0 against Italy in a World Cup qualifier in February at Wembley.

"Your chances are obviously going to be less by taking that player out of your side," said Hoddle, but he added that it did not matter so long as the side still boasted sufficient talent to measure up against their opponents.

Shearer's injury happened in July, during a pre-season friendly against Chelsea at Everton's Goodison Park, when he went over on his right ankle on the wet turf.

It was a freak occurrence, with no other player to be blamed, unlike a tackle last

Thursday that injured fellow international striker Robbie Fowler.

Fowler damaged knee ligaments in a pre-season friendly for Liverpool against a Norwegian select team in Oslo and is expected

to miss the start of the season this weekend, although he should be fit in time for the World Cup qualifiers.

England play Moldova at Wembley, Sept. 10, and group leaders Italy at Rome's Olympic Stadium, 11 October.

"In a football game you are going to get injuries, it's just unfortunate that it's happened to two of our prolific goal-scorers really so early in the season," said Hoddle.

Hoddle said he was sure

striker Teddy Sheringham's move from Tottenham to Manchester United as the retired Eric Cantona's replacement would turn out to be a very positive development for both player and club.

He even raised a few eyebrows by suggesting that, far from being overawed by Champions' League appearances for United, Sheringham was actually used to a bigger arena than Cantona.

"Eric Cantona for all the great things he has done for United, wasn't playing international football."

"So I think that will be an added bonus that I think the United fans will see over the coming months."

United start the season on Saturday as most people's favourites for a fifth league title since 1993.

Hoddle said the new season, with players fighting to

get into the World Cup reckoning in the run-up to the finals in France next year, would be more exciting than ever.

He recognised that the arrival of a new wave of foreign talent had put the squeeze on home-grown players and envisaged a time when English premier league sides all had between seven and eight foreigners on their books. But he said top level players—the Paul Scholes, David Beckham and Nicky Butts—would always flourish and some of the less glamorous clubs would grow in stature.

"Football is on the up at the moment, it's fashionable and people want to see their sides playing good, fashionable football," he said. "I think that some of the best football I saw last season was from Coventry."

## Inter Milan ready to net

